

New Hampshire 2013 Financial Assistance Program Handbook

12/4/2012

Information contained in this handbook is NH NRCS State Policy and must be followed unless a written waiver is granted by the State Office Lead on the specific issue.

2013 Financial Assistance Program Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to serve as a reference for NRCS employees who implement Financial Assistance Programs in New Hampshire. This handbook is not a stand-alone document. It must be used along with other NRCS references, including the National Planning Procedures Handbook, the Conservation Programs Manual (e.g. Part 515 - EQIP, Part 517 – WHIP, Part 521 – AMA and Part 512 - Conservation Program Contracting), the New Hampshire Field Office Technical Guide (especially Section IV, New Hampshire conservation practice standards), and other technical and policy references.

NRCS provides both technical assistance for planning and financial assistance for implementation of practices to address **Priority Resource Concerns**. Given the limited amount of financial assistance, only the applications with the greatest environmental benefit will receive funding assistance. Producers work with NRCS on voluntary basis. They do not have to follow our standard and specification and may choose to implement practices on their own, without financial assistance. When a producer enters into a contract with NRCS to help implement conservation practices, the producer agrees to meet (or exceed) NRCS standards and specifications, follow program policies and maintain the practice for the designated lifespan.

Financial assistance is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to address existing resource concerns. Financial assistance is also limited to the least cost alternative which will remain stable under design conditions. Any addition or embellishment to a contracted practice must be approved by NRCS and, if approved, installed at the participant's expense.

NEPA Compliance - Environmental Evaluation Review

NRCS field office personnel shall conduct an Environmental Evaluation (EE) during plan development for any land which will be included in or affected by a contract prior to contract obligation. The evaluation will be documented on the NRCS-CPA-52. As a minimum, the EE will consider the effects of No Action and one Alternative. The Conservation Planner will complete the NRCS-CPA-52 through Section P. The District Conservationist will complete the rest of the form (Sections Q – S). **The EE must be completed and documented by the NRCS staff member conducting the planning using the National version of the NRCS -CPA-52. Planners who are not yet Certified Conservation Planners must have their plan and CPA-52 reviewed by a Certified Conservation Planner prior to contract obligation.**

All planned practices will be substantiated by resource assessment and evaluation as a necessary treatment to solve an identified resource concern.

Required Evaluation Procedures

Resource assessment tools listed in the 'New Hampshire State Resource Concerns and Quality Criteria' (Section III of the NH electronic Field Office Technical Guide) will be used when conducting EEs. Typical resource assessment tools include, but are not limited to:

Conservation Planning Client Interview	RUSLE2, Soil Condition Index & STIR
WIN-PST	NHB Reviews for T&E and declining species
Several GIS Layers with critical info	Soils maps and interpretations

Resource assessments will be documented during the conservation planning process using con-6 notes, maps, resource information and the CPA-52 form.

All conservation planning for current year contracting will follow current planning policies, procedures and standards. As such, where conservation plans were developed in the past, those plans will be re-evaluated and updated as necessary to ensure any approved contracts will be applied according to current policies and standards.

Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation

A review of rare, threatened or endangered species is required for all planned practices through farm bill programs. NHB data is available to planners on their geodata drive/wildlife folder which documents Federal or State listed Threatened, Endangered, Regional Concern species and natural communities/systems. When projects exist within the buffered range, consultation with State or Federal partners is a must. If you have questions or would like discussions facilitated for you please contact Don Keirstead 603-868-9931 x 128.

Key points of the NHB Data Sharing Agreement are:

1. All data are confidential and for NRCS internal use only.
2. NRCS will use the NHB data layer as a pre-screening layer before site visits with landowners.
3. If practices are planned within buffered NHB data, planners will request data from NHB prior to ranking projects.
4. NHB and NHFG reserve the right to make impact determinations (positive or negative) on all projects.
5. NRCS staff will not make determinations of impact for properties which co-occur within buffered data ranges.
6. NRCS staff may share NHB data with landowners if the data is clipped to their property only. NRCS will not provide any data off the landowner’s property. If property lines are poorly understood, please do not share maps until a suitable map can be provided. Be conservative!
7. If an occurrence is on the property and the landowner wants more information and they have signed an application, NRCS will provide the landowner a formal NHB request as part of the planning process.
8. If an occurrence is on the property and the landowner wants more information and has not signed an application, the landowner will be encouraged to request NHB data.
9. If an occurrence is on the neighbor’s property and within the buffered range, NRCS can assist the landowner in identifying habitat which may be used by the species on their property. Landowners in this case will only receive a list of species within a 1 mile radius.
10. Data will be updated approximately every 3 months.

Endangered Species Act

The following species are a subset of the species Federally Listed in New Hampshire and may occur in areas where NRCS funds projects. US Fish and Wildlife Service must be contacted for consultation where projects may adversely or positively affect the following species.

BIRDS	PLANTS:	MAMMALS:	INSECTS:
Plover, piping	Jesup's milk-vetch	Canada lynx	Beetle, Puritan tiger

Tern, roseate	Robbins cinquefoil	Cougar, Eastern	Butterfly, Karner blue
	Small whorled pogonia	Wolf, gray	
MOLLUSKS:	Northeastern bulrush		
Wedgemussel, dwarf			

Priority GIS Data is available for the following species

New England Cottontail is currently a Candidate for Federal listing.

Blanding’s Turtle is currently a Federal “at-risk” species

Consultation for these species is required through New Hampshire Fish and Game.

Dwarf Wedge Mussel- Federally listed

CCAA and SHA Agreements

Landowners who have habitat in priority areas for candidate or listed species may be interested in assurances to continue to manage their properties while providing benefits to listed species and also be covered for incidental take. For New England Cottontail, landowners are encouraged to work with NHFG and USFWS to develop a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA). For federally listed species named above, Safe Harbor Agreements (SHA) are available.

Contacts for rare, threatened and endangered species:

<p>Susi VonOettingen (PPrimary Contact for Federal Species) Endangered Species Biologist U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 70 Commercial Street, Suite 300 Concord, NH 03301-5087 Phone: 603-223-2541 extension 22 Fax: (603) 223-0104 Email: Susi_vonOettingen@fws.gov</p>	<p>Melissa Coppola (PPrimary Contact for All NHB Data) Botanist New Hampshire Heritage Bureau 172 Pembroke Rd PO Box 1856 Concord, NH 03301-1856 mcoppola@dred.state.nh.us (603) 271-2215 x323</p>
<p>Mike Marchand General Consultation for State Species State Listed- Amphibians and Reptiles Fresh Water Mussels New Hampshire Fish and Game Wildlife Biologist, Wetlands Biologist (603) 271-2461 Michael.Marchand@wildlife.nh.gov</p>	<p>Heidi Holman New England Cottontail New Hampshire Fish and Game Terrestrial Ecologist (603) 271-3018 Heidi.Holman@wildlife.nh.gov</p>
<p>Emily Brunkhurst Bats and White Nose Syndrome New Hampshire Fish and Game Wildlife Biologist (603) 271-2461 Emily.Brunkhurst@wildlife.nh.gov</p>	<p>Kim Tuttle Environmental Review Biologist 603-271-6544 Kim.tuttle@wildlife.nh.gov</p>

Cultural Resources Review

A Cultural Resources Review is needed for all practices that disturb the ground (See Table 1 for list). Cultural Resources Reviews shall be completed during the planning process and prior to contract obligation. Planners must use their best professional judgment and work with the Cultural Resources Coordinator (Don Richard) to prioritize Cultural Resource Reviews for the practices with the greatest chance of impacting Cultural or Historic Resources.

Describe each planned practice on the Practice Description Form for Cultural Resources Review (NH-ECS-1) and e-mail it to the Cultural Resources Coordinator together with a copy of the Conservation Plan that shows the location of the planned practices. The FSA Tract number, type of practice planned, environmental setting, current land use and previous disturbance (excluding cultivation) documented within the area of potential effect (APE) shall be described on the form. The stratigraphic integrity of the area of potential effect should be described. The documentation of partial or significant disturbance within the APE will determine how much, if any, further CR review is needed. An example of the environmental setting section could be: a Waste Storage System (313) and a Heavy Use Area Protection (561) are planned within the farm complex in a long-used severely disturbed barnyard; or the diversion and tile line will be constructed on a knoll overlooking a drainage. It is important to accurately provide the extent of disturbance anticipated for each practice (length, width and depth). The extent of disturbance is crucial for CR review purposes and determining whether a site visit is needed. For a Streambank Protection practice the length and width of the planned disturbance are more important than depth. The width of this practice should show the amount of shaping needed to the top of bank to provide a suitable slope to place rock rip rap. **A visit will be needed for all streambank protection projects.** The distance of the planned practice from a natural drainage, landform slope and soil type are important factors for review purposes.

Indirect impacts are also important project components to consider. For example, the source location of material needed to line a waste storage pond, or soil used to fill a scour hole in cropland needs to be submitted for review because this disturbance is a result of the planned practice. If excess construction material needs to be wasted, such as spoil from wetland restoration or a culvert replacement practice, the location of where this material will be discarded must also be described on the form and located on a USGS map or orthophoto image. Any ground disturbing activity, whether direct or indirect, needs to be described on the form and submitted for a CR review.

Finally, describing landowner or operator knowledge about known cultural resources on the property (arrowheads, spear points, cellar holes, mill dams, etc.) will be helpful for the CR review process.

Table 1. 2013 Cultural Resource and On-Site Soil Investigation Requirements for Conservation Practices

Practice	Code	CR - Ground Disturbing Practice	On-site Soil Investigation Required	Practice	Code	CR - Ground Disturbing Practice	On-site Soil Investigation Required
Access Control	472	PG	Potential	Nutrient Management	590	NG	No
Access Road	560	G	Potential	Obstruction Removal	500	G	Yes
Agrichemical Handling Facility	309	G	Yes	Pipeline	516	G	Yes - buried
Anaerobic Digester	366	G	Yes	Pond Sealing or Lining	521A	G	Yes
Animal Mortality Facility	316	G	Yes	Prescribed Grazing	528	NG	No
Animal Trails & Walkways	575	G	Potential	Pumping Plant	533	G	No
Aquatic Organism Passage	396	G	Potential	Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till	345	NG	No
Brush Management	314	PG	No	Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till, Strip Till/Direct Seed	329	NG	No
Combustion System Improvement	372	NG	No	Residue Management, Seasonal	344	NG	No
Composting Facility	317	G	Yes	Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats	643	PG	No
Conservation Cover	327	PG	No	Riparian Forest Buffer	391	PG	Potential
Conservation Crop Rotation	328	NG	No	Roof Runoff Structure	558	PG	Potential
Cover Crops	340	NG	No	Roofs and Covers	367	PG	No
Critical Area Planting	342	PG	No	Seasonal High Tunnel System	798	PG	Potential
Deep Tillage	324	G	Potential	Sediment Basin	350	G	Potential
Diversion	362	G	Yes	Solid Liquid Separation Facility	632	G	Yes
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	647	PG	No	Spring Development	574	G	Yes
Farmstead Energy Improvements	374	NG	No	Stream Crossing	578	G	Potential

Table 1 Continued

Practice	Code	CR - Ground Disturbing Practice	On-site Soil Investigation Required	Practice	Code	CR - Ground Disturbing Practice	On-site Soil Investigation Required
Fence	382	PG	No	Stream Habitat Improvement & Management	395	PG	Potential
Filter Strip	393	G	No	Streambank & Shoreline Protection	580	G	Yes
Forage & Biomass Planting	512	NG	No	Stripcropping	585	PG	Potential
Forest Stand Improvement	666	NG	No	Structure for Water Control	587	G	Potential
Forest Trails & Landings	655	G	Yes - new/difficult	Subsurface Drain	606	G	Yes
Grade Stabilization Structure	410	G	Potential	Tree/Shrub Establishment	612	PG	No
Grassed Waterway	412	G	Yes	Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	490	PG	No
Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment	548	NG	No	Underground Outlet	620	G	Potential
Heavy Use Area Protection	561	G	Yes	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	645	PG	No
Herbaceous Weed Control	315	NG	No	Vegetated Treatment Area	635	PG	Yes
Integrated Pest Management	595	NG	No	Waste Storage Facility	313	G	Yes
Irrigation Pipeline	430	G	Yes	Waste Transfer	634	G	Potential
Irrigation Storage Reservoir	436	G	Yes	Waste Treatment	629	G	Yes
Irrigation System - Micro	441	G	No	Water and Sediment Control Basin	638	G	Yes
Irrigation Water Management	449	NG	No	Water Well	642	G	Yes - dug well
Lined Waterway or Outlet	468	G	Yes	Watering Facility	614	NG	No
Mulching	484	NG	No				
Cultural Resources	G	Ground disturbing practice - CR review required		On-site soil investigations , when needed, will be completed by a Soil Scientist. Practices with a Soil Investigation Rating of "Potential", may depend upon the planned scenario, likelihood of hydric or other problem soils or other complicating site conditions.			
	PG	Potentially ground disturbing practice – some scenarios or installations may require a review.					
	NG	Non-ground disturbing practice. Does not require a review under typical installations – some limited situations may warrant a review.					

On-site soil investigations

Information about soil properties and condition is a key part of the inventory and evaluation step of conservation planning. For a list of practices where an on-site soil investigation is **required** or recommended, see Table 1. If there is the potential that soil conditions may alter the design or prohibit the installation of a planned conservation practice, an on-site investigation by a Soil Scientist shall be completed early in the planning process. Soil Scientists can help landowners, operators and NRCS staff not only identify areas to avoid, and also may help identify the best location on the property for the intended practice.

In addition to on-site reviews for specific conservation practices, Soil Scientists are available to provide soil investigations for, but not limited to the following:

- Hydric soil determinations / verifications
- Wetland determinations / verifications
- HEL determinations / verifications
- Soil mapping verifications

The Soils staff will work closely with the Conservation Planning and Engineering staffs to provide timely assistance with the appropriate level of detail required for the specific project.

Practice Cost Information and Payment Schedules

NRCS uses practice payment schedules to determine the amount of financial assistance offered for one or more scenarios within each practice. Practice payment schedules offer a rough estimate of the cost of a typical scenario within the state or region, but are not a replacement for a detailed cost estimate. Planners need to convey this information to producer and encourage them to get estimates from the private sector if they don't plan to do the work themselves; this documentation is helpful to landowners to understand their required out-of-pocket match and also to NRCS in selecting a scenario which is the best fit. A list of contractors has been made available from NHACD.

Practice Payment Schedules include the most common implementation scenarios within a practice standard. If there are other options outside the range of existing scenarios or one that falls between two (or more) scenarios a waiver may be requested to address the existing resource concern with an alternative approach. All requests for a Practice Payment Schedule Scenario waiver must be approved by the State Resource Conservationist, State Conservation Engineer or Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, based on the nature of the request. The producer is responsible for providing information to NRCS to demonstrate that the alternative approach addresses the resource concern and cost effectiveness.

2013 Priority Resource Concerns

New Hampshire NRCS has established nine Priority Resource Concerns for Financial Assistance during the 2013 Fiscal Year. All applications for Financial Assistance programs (EQIP, WHIP

and AMA) must address at least one Priority Resource Concern to be evaluated as a high or medium priority for funding. The 2013 Priority Resource Concerns are:

1. **Water Quality Degradation: Excess nutrients in surface and ground waters** – All land uses
2. **Degraded Plant Condition: Inadequate structure and composition** – Forest and pasture
3. **Soil Erosion: Sheet and rill** – Cropland and pasture
4. **Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife: Habitat Degradation** – All land uses
5. **Degraded Plant Condition: Undesirable plant productivity and health** – Pasture and cropland
6. **Water Quality Degradation: Excessive sediment in surface waters** – All land uses
7. **Soil Erosion: Concentrated flow erosion** – All land uses
8. **Degraded Plant Condition: Excessive plant pest pressure** – All land uses
9. **Inefficient Energy Use: Equipment and Facilities** – All land uses

Use of Conservation Practices to Address Priority Resource Concerns

Facilitating Practices

The conservation practices offered through our financial assistance program have been selected because they address our priority resource concerns in New Hampshire. We also offer a few conservation practices that may not have a significant conservation benefit if used alone, but are important parts of a conservation system or facilitate implementation of other conservation practices. Conservation practices most commonly used to facilitate other practices include:

Practice name	Code	Practice Specific Information*
Access Road	560	Controlling erosion on existing roads or to facilitate installation/use of conservation practices on other land-uses where a permanent heavy-duty travel way is required.
Animal Trails & Walkways – This practice is offered under Heavy Use Area (561) in 2013	575	Controlling erosion on existing trails or to facilitate installation/use of prescribed grazing or other livestock management practices where a permanent heavy-duty travel way is required.
Fence	382	Installation for water quality (livestock exclusion from surface waters and wetlands), safety (associated with engineering practices) or to facilitate prescribed grazing as designed in an NRCS approved grazing management plan.
Forest Trails & Landings	655	Controlling erosion on existing trails or to facilitate forestry or wildlife habitat management practices where a repeated-use travel way is required.

Obstruction Removal	500	To facilitate installation of selected practices where debris or other obstructions prevent installation or required maintenance of the practice. See detailed information on the Obstruction removal practice page.
Subsurface Drainage	606	As needed to support function of other engineering practices or to manage runoff from a newly installed Seasonal High Tunnel. Subsurface drainage is not to be used to drain wet cropland or pastures. NRCS staff should work with producers to have them avoid these areas during the wet season – not drain them to improve water quality.
Water Well	642	Only approved to address a documented water quality resource concern where installation of a well will improve the water quality impaired by the agricultural operation – alternative livestock water if currently accessing surface water and wetlands; facilitate prescribed grazing system only if prescribed grazing will improve water quality (shifting from corn to sod based system near surface water/wetlands). Water wells for irrigation will also need to demonstrate that it will improve water quality impaired by the agricultural operation. Water Quantity is not an approved resource concern for Water Well for Financial Assistance.

*These conservation practices are only to be use to facilitate other practices or address significant priority resource concerns in NH. They should not be planned solely for production purposes or for the owner/operators convenience. Please see specific information in the practice detail section.

Management Practices

Management practices are those that require primarily management techniques and methods to implement the practice. These practices have a 1-year lifespan. Payments for management practices are limited to a maximum of three separate payments during the term of the contract. In New Hampshire some management practices require the producer to implement three years of the management practice to justify the cost of related infrastructure payments.

Practice name	Code	Min/Max Instances Required	Other Comments
Conservation Crop Rotation	328	3	Year 1 is the year the soil conserving crop is planted.
Cover Crop	340	1-3	If producers are already using cover crops they are eligible for FA if they are trying a different cover crop (higher/different level of treatment). The number of contracted instances is at the discretion of the planner and producer.

Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Management	647	1-3 – does not need to be in consecutive years	Delayed mowing scenario only – other scenarios are not considered management practices
Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment	548	1-3 – does not need to be in consecutive years	The number of contracted instances is at the discretion of the planner and producer.
Integrated Pest Management	595	1-3	The number of contracted instances is at the discretion of the planner and producer.
Irrigation Water Management	449	3 years if NRCS provided FA for irrigation practices. 1-3 to follow a plan without FA for practices.	If NRCS provides FA for any portion of the irrigation system, the producer must implement three years of 449 and provide documentation to support the implementation. Implementing recommendations from an IWM Plan without NRCS FA for infrastructure does not require multiple years of 449 implementation
Mulching	484	1-3	The number of contracted instances is at the discretion of the planner and producer.
Nutrient Management - standard	590	3 years if NRCS provided FA for ag waste system practices. 1-3 to follow a plan without FA for practices.	If NRCS provides FA for any portion of a waste management system, the producer must implement three years of 590 and provide documentation to support the implementation. Implementing recommendations from a Soil Health Assessment or optional NMP does not implementation of 590.
Nutrient Management – Soil Health Assessments	590	1-2	Soil Health Assessments are approved for 2 instances on the same land and are recommended to be at least 2 years apart.
Prescribed Grazing	528	3 years if NRCS provided FA for grazing practices. 1-3 to follow a plan without FA for practices.	If NRCS provides FA for any portion of a grazing management system, the producer must implement three years of 528 and provide documentation to support the implementation. Implementing recommendations from a Grazing Management Plan without NRCS FA for infrastructure does not require multiple years of 528 implementation
Residue/Tillage	329,	1-3	The number of contracted instances

Management	344, 345		is at the discretion of the planner and producer.
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The following practices (or scenarios) are not considered management practices for NH NRCS Financial Assistance Programs:

- Brush Management - This practice has a 10 year lifespan and cannot be contracted more than once on the same footprint during the 10 year lifespan.
- Deep Tillage
- Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Development and Management - all scenarios except delayed mowing
- Herbaceous Weed Control - This practice has a 5 year lifespan and cannot be contracted more than once on the same footprint during the 5 year lifespan.
- Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats
- Stream Habitat Improvement and Management
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

Determining Eligible Payment Schedule Costs

EQIP Manual: 515.91

Eligible Costs: (See Manual for complete reference)

- (1) Payment rates are limited to the least-cost alternative to achieve the minimum practice standards and specifications needed to address the resource concerns. The least-cost alternative limitation is only applicable to payment rates and does not limit choice of treatment options. However, treatment options must meet NRCS specifications, address the identified resource concern, and be approved by an individual with NRCS approval authority.

Eligibility of Practice Costs

440-CPM, Part 515.81- Conservation Practices and Planning Activities (See Manual for complete reference)

Eligible conservation practices:

- (1) Are approved in the FOTG and meet the purpose and definition of the practice standard.
- (2) Provide beneficial, natural resource conservation or environmental enhancements.
- (3) Meet the intent of the program and identified natural resource concerns.
- (4) Contain operation and maintenance requirements.
- (5) Meet the requirements outlined in 440-CPM-512, Subpart B and 440-CPM-515, Subpart I.

440-CPM, Part 515.81- D: Eligible Conservation Practices

Conservation practices that include portable equipment may only be supported through EQIP in accordance with 440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart J. The portable equipment may only be relocated to land that meets land eligibility requirements and that is included in the contract; therefore, the contract must include all the land where the equipment will be used.

Retrofitting of structural practices is allowable provided that a higher level of conservation benefit (e.g., irrigation water conservation efficiency) can be documented. Retrofitting will only be allowed if it is more cost efficient than an alternative replacement system. Retrofitting must be approved by the State Conservationist as an eligible practice component prior to contracting. Retrofitting will not be allowed to replace components that are required to be maintained for normal operation of the system.

440-CPM, Part 515.81- E: Ineligible Conservation Practices (See Manual for further references)

(1) Ineligible conservation practices are those:

(i) In which the purpose is to enhance production without providing an identifiable conservation benefit or addressing a natural resource concern. Examples include:

Water Well (642) used to bring new land under irrigation is an ineligible practice. Water well (642) installed for irrigation is eligible if used to increase efficiency of an existing irrigation system, or if the producer is participating in an approved watershed-wide project with will effectively conserve water.

- Fence (382) or Access Control (472) is ineligible if the primary purpose is to separate ownership or exclude livestock from transportation networks, residential, commercial or industrial areas, exclude deer, hogs or other animals from cropland.

Exception:

-Boundary fence or perimeter fence is eligible:

on expired or expiring CRP land to establish a grazing operation; however the practice may not be installed until the CRP contract has expired.

-on land to protect, restore, develop or enhance for wildlife or to exclude livestock from an environmentally sensitive area such as riparian area or wetland.

On land where the fence is an integral part of a conservation management system, such as a planned grazing system that facilitates improved management of grazing land.

(ii) That the producer has already installed to address an identified resource concern on a specific land unit. However, land management practices that address a higher level quality concern may be implemented again on the same land unit. Producers may also apply for EQIP financial assistance to implement a management practice to address a

resource concern on land within the operation which has not been previously implemented.

(iii) Practices that were commenced prior to contract obligation by the NRCS approving official, unless waived by the State Conservationist in accordance with 440-CPM, Part 515, Subpart B.

(iv) That the producer is likely to apply without EQIP financial assistance, such as Practices a producer is required to establish as a result of a judicial or court action.

Note: Just being accused of violating a law or regulation does not make an applicant ineligible. If a producer has been accused of violating a law or regulation they may still voluntarily apply a conservation practice to comply with the law or regulation. The practice may be eligible for EQIP financial assistance.

(v) Water conservation or irrigation related practices on land that has not been under irrigation for 2 out of the past 5 years.

(vi) Practices or activities where the primary purpose is renewable energy production.

(vii) Conservation practices or activities that defeat the purpose of EQIP or other conservation program contracts are ineligible.

(viii) Practices which do not address a resource concern directly tied to eligible land, such as a practice implemented entirely within a water area and which does not address a resource concern related to the submerged land.

Note: EQIP regulation states (Section 1466.1, "Applicability"): "The purposes of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are to promote agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality as compatible goals and to optimize benefits." This should not be interpreted to mean that EQIP may pay for production-related practices or activities when there will be little or no environmental benefit. The correct understanding of this program purpose is that EQIP recognizes that implementing conservation practices that address a natural resource concern may be compatible with production operations.

Process for Validating Irrigation History

Refer to EQIP Eligibility Documentation Checklist - Irrigation History in EQIP Manual for required documentation to support irrigation history

A participant will be eligible for financial assistance for water conservation or irrigation related structural, vegetative, and land management practices **only on land that has been irrigated for two of the last five years prior to application for assistance**. This means that irrigation must have been part of managing the cropping system to meet the needs of the plant and to maintain the yields of an irrigated crop. To ensure the practice meets the program purpose, the irrigation practice must be addressing an identified resource concern such as Soil Erosion – Irrigation Induced or Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use. (See NB 300-11-30) State Conservationists will supplement this manual to identify the process and documentation necessary to validate irrigation history.

The NRCS District Conservationist or other representative providing assistance to the applicant will ensure that the applicant completes the ‘NH Irrigation History Documentation’ for **all** applications that involve any irrigation-related practice. This document will be maintained in the customer’s case file. The document should be completed by the applicant during the Land Eligibility determination conducted by NRCS and faxed to the NH NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Programs or designee along with other supporting documents at time of contract obligation.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL CONSERVATION PLANNERS ARE REQUIRED TO CHECK UPDATES TO NATIONAL PROGRAM MANUALS ON LINE (Title 440, Part 515).
<http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Contract Modifications

440-CPM, Part 512.50 B. Modification Process

- (v) In-Scope Modifications: Modifications that result in an obligation increase must be within the scope of the original contract and are generally categorized as cost overrun. Contract modifications are generally within the scope if they are used to carry out the original intent of the contract on the original land, and the modifications will treat the original resource concern according to the ranking criteria on which contract approval was based.
- (vi) Modifications that increase obligations by \$500 or more require a second-level review in Fund Manager. The State-designated second-level reviewer verifies and approves or rejects the obligation using the Fund Manager processing report, “Accept/Reject Obligations.”
- (viii) Out of Scope Modifications: Modifications involving a change in scope are prohibited for all programs. Contract modifications are out of scope if they add new or additional practices or if they change or add additional resource concerns.

The Conservation Program Contracting Manual, section 512.50, Modifications, paragraph D., Modifications that Require Signatures, (i) states; “Adding land to an existing contract is considered a ‘change-in-scope’ action. This action is generally not permitted.”

Practice Service Life

Refer to Conservation Program Contracting Manual: 512.40 - Participant Responsibilities (8)

Maintain the conservation treatment installed on the land unit as provided in the contract for the lifespan of each conservation practice as identified on the Forms NRCS-CPA-1155 or NRCS-CPA-1156.

512.11 (D) All conservation practices established through a CPC will be maintained for the established life span. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) must be included for each practice with O&M requirements. This can be incorporated as part of the practice narrative or through a separate O&M plan, as necessary. The lifespan of a practice may extend beyond the length of the program contract. The practice lifespan is defined as the time period in which the conservation practices are to be used and maintained for their intended purposes as defined by NRCS technical references.

For example, if a five year contract was written and Cover Crop (lifespan 1 year) was contracted for three years beginning the first year, it would be implemented for three years and the client would not be required to plant a cover crop in years four and five. In the same contract, if it also includes Riparian Forest Buffer (lifespan 15 years) in any year of the contract the practice must be maintained for 15 years from the installation date.

Ranking Applications

NRCS evaluates applications using a ranking tool developed to determine which applications provide the greatest environmental benefit by addressing priority resource concerns by implementing conservation practices. Applications shall be ranked using the appropriate ranking tool and the guidance developed by the NH NRCS State Office Staff. For questions about the ranking guidance and requests for a waiver to issue points outside of the standard guidance contact the State Resource Conservationist (Kim McCracken).

Conservation Activity Plans

In addition to standard conservation plans, NRCS also offers detailed conservation plans for many types of operations/purposes such as comprehensive nutrient management plans, grazing management plans and forest management plans. In some cases, NRCS staff develops these detailed plans and in other situations a Technical Service Provider may develop the detailed plan.

A Conservation Activity Plan is a detailed Conservation Plan provided to the producer by a Technical Service Provider. If NRCS has developed a plan (CNMP, nutrient management, grazing, irrigation water management) or a significant portion of a plan through CTA (or a financial assistance program), the producer is not eligible for financial assist for CAP as we cannot pay our staff to do the work and pay a Technical Service Provider for the same work.

New Hampshire NRCS will offer financial assistance through EQIP for development of Conservation Activity Plans (CAP) under the 2013 program:

Agricultural Energy Management Plan (Headquarters) – Code 122
Agricultural Energy Management Plan (Landscape) – Code 124
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan – Code 102
Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition – Code 138
Fish and Wildlife Management Plan – Code 142
Forest Management Plan – Code 106
Grazing Management Plan – Code 110
Integrated Pest Management Plan – Code 114
Irrigation Water Management Plan – Code 118
Nutrient Management Plan – Code 104

All CAPs contracted in 2013 shall follow the Nationally-developed CAP criteria and templates available on the TechReg Website.

Quality Assurance

NH NRCS will review the first CAP developed by TSP's. Similar non-CAP plan equivalents developed by NRCS staff will also be reviewed. All CAPs are subject to annual 5 percent quality assurance review and random spot-checking at any time. **Contact the NH TSP Coordinators – Mike Lynch and Ryan DuBois – for issue related to the quality of CAPs and other TSP related issues.**

Other information about CAPs:

- Only Technical Service Providers will be providing the technical assistance associated with development of the CAPs.
- **To avoid conflicts between practices planned in a contract and recommendations in CAPs, it is highly recommended that CAPs are written and reviewed in the field by NRCS staff prior to providing financial assistance. This is optional for some CAPs, however, the following CAPs are required to be written prior to entering into a contract for facilitating practices :**
 - Ag Energy Plan (HQ) is required prior to entering into a contract for any Farmstead Energy Improvement (374) scenario. This practice is only offered in the EQIP Energy Initiative.
 - Comprehensive Nutrient Management (CNMP)
 - Forest Management
 - Grazing Management
 - Irrigation Water Management
- Any EQIP contract containing a CAP will include only the CAP and no other conservation practices.
- No more than one Conservation Activity Plan can be in an application and/or contract for the same acreage at the same time. **EXCEPTION:** CNMP and Agricultural Energy Management (Headquarters) Plans can be planned on the same acres.
- CNMP should be planned on the HQ land unit. However since the nutrient management portion of the plan must include the cropland, hayland and pasture, the producer shall not have a CNMP CAP and a Grazing, IPM, IWM or other similar plan on the same acres at the same time.
- The CAP must be completed (written) prior to any conservation practice, applicable to the specific CAP plan, being implemented.

- A copy of the CAP (or equivalent document meeting NRCS standards) must be provided to NRCS prior to contract obligation for conservation practices.

Agricultural Energy Management Plan (Headquarters)

Written - Code 122

Definition:

An Agricultural Energy Management Plan (AgEMP) contains the strategy by which the producer will explore and address the on-farm energy problems and opportunities on the farmstead/headquarters.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied to develop a plan that includes an energy audit and energy conservation practices to help conserve energy on the farmstead.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice may be applied to Headquarters energy conservation concerns.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For Energy Management Plans (Audits) developed by certified Technical Service Providers.
- Only where benefits to energy conservation can be reasonably expected to be achieved.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For Energy Management Plans developed by anyone other than a certified Technical Service Provider.
- For Energy Management Plans that address landscape (cropland, pastureland, forestland, etc) energy conservation. These issues must be addressed through an AgEMP – Landscape Code 124.

Other Considerations:

- Application of this practice shall be size-neutral; however, AgEMP's should not be applied where current energy use is too low to reasonably expect a significant reduction through energy conservation practices.
- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 122 have been met in the "Deliverables" section.

Agricultural Energy Management Plan (Landscape)

Written - Code 124

Definition:

An Agricultural Energy Management Plan (AgEMP) contains the strategy by which the producer will explore and address his/her on-farm energy problems and opportunities on cropland, pasture and forestland.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied to develop a plan that includes an energy audit and energy conservation practices to help conserve energy on farm operations on cropland, pasture and forestland.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice may be applied to energy conservation concerns on cropland, pasture and/or forestland.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For Energy Management Plans developed by certified Technical Service Providers.
- Only where benefits to energy conservation can be reasonably expected to be achieved.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For Energy Management Plans developed by anyone other than a certified Technical Service Provider.
- For Energy Management Plans that address headquarters (cropland, pastureland, forestland, etc) energy conservation

Other Considerations:

- Application of this practice shall be size-neutral; however, AgEMP's should not be applied where current energy use is too low to reasonably expect a significant reduction through energy conservation practices.
- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 124 have been met in the "Deliverables" section.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

Written - Code 102

Definition:

A CNMP is a conservation plan that is unique to animal feeding operations. A CNMP addresses natural resource concerns dealing with soil erosion and other land treatment needs, manure and wastewater handling, and nutrient management. A CNMP is developed to assist a livestock farm address water quality concerns while achieving production goals, while meeting all applicable local, tribal, State, and Federal water quality goals or regulations.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To document the livestock farm's plan to manage manure and organic by-products by combining conservation practices and management activities into a conservation system that, when implemented, will achieve the goal of the producer and protect or improve water quality.

Condition Where Practice Applies

Where management and conservation actions will be identified and followed to meet clearly defined soil and water conservation goals, including nutrient management, on an animal feeding operation. **The technical guidance on this page is also applicable to CNMPs developed by NRCS staff.**

Policies

- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP): If an EQIP plan of operations includes the handling and/or storage/treatment of manure or wastewater, the participant must develop and provide NRCS a copy of the CNMP prior to beginning the installation of any waste storage/ handling facility or nutrient management activities. Implementation of all the practices in the CNMP is required, regardless of the financial assistance provided.
- The CNMP **shall** be implemented through Nutrient Management (590) for 3 years.
- Small AFO's (<40 AUE's) may be eligible for FA without the development of a CNMP, if preventive measures have been installed to prevent discharge of manure runoff from the production and land treatment areas.
 - Use NH CNMP Waiver Worksheet located in the Nutrient Management (590) folder in EFOTG Section IV
 - More information is found in the General Manual 190.405.D

CNMP Format and Technical Criteria Policy:

All CNMPs shall be produced following the instructions found in NI_190_304, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan Technical Criteria

<http://directives.sc.gov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=25686>

The national template shall be the required format of a CNMP. The national template, the producer activity document (PAD), and NH CNMP instructions are located in NH eFOTG Section IV, Conservation Practice Standards, Nutrient Management (590). Templates can also be found within the Manure Management Planner software <http://www.agry.purdue.edu/mmp/>

The planning period for NH CNMPs shall be for 3 years. The CNMP shall be revised if animal units or acreage changes by >10%, or if the crop rotation, type of livestock, method of manure storage, or method of manure application changes.

CNMP Delivery

1. Submit the following to NRCS for review and signatures:

- Printed copy of the CNMP document.
- CNMP and PAD document file
- All Nutrient Management planning files (*e.g.* .xls files for manure and nutrient calculators, NH P-index, NH N-leaching index, .awm and .mmp files)
- Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE2) database file (.gdb)
- Conservation plan .xml file from Customer Service Toolkit
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) shapefiles if requested.

In order to review the CNMP, all items above must be submitted. After all items are submitted, NRCS personnel will review CNMP conservation activity plans using the CNMP CAP checklist located in on TechReg or in NH eFOTG Section IV, Conservation Practice Standards

2. Once the CNMP has been reviewed and signed by the planner(s) and the NRCS reviewer, copies of the CNMP and PAD document(s) are delivered to the producer for signature. The planner returns one copy of the finalized and signed documents to the NRCS Field Service Center, and the producer retains a signed copy.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for any agricultural operation where manure is applied to the land and /or produced,

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for applicants where a CNMP has already been developed, unless an updated plan is needed due to substantial changes in the farm operation since initial CNMP development.
- For a CNMP CAP when a Nutrient Management CAP (104) or NRCS developed nutrient management plan has been developed (*i.e.* adding a manure and wastewater handling and storage plan to a recently completed nutrient management plan).

Other Considerations:

- CNMP must address a resource concern for operations of any size; pay attention to smaller operations to ensure that there is a resource concern and a need for a CNMP
- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 102 have been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Conservation Plan Supporting Organic Transition

Written - Code 138

Definition

An Organic Transition Plan provides the producer with necessary agricultural management strategies to minimize negative impacts of agricultural production on soil, water, air, plant, animal and social and cultural resources while transitioning to organic production.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To provide a payment for development and adoption of a Transition to Organic Production Plan, written with assistance of a qualified professional (Technical Service Provider), which positively benefits natural resources and meets the objectives of the applicant. The overarching goal is for the plan to (i) assist the producer with completion of the Organic System Plan (OSP), (ii) educate the producer about commonly used organic management techniques, and (iii) assist the producer with selection of approved inputs.

Condition Where Practice Applies

All agricultural land which has not already had an organic system plan developed, and or has not already transitioned to organic status. This includes annual cropland, rotated cropland, hay land, pasture land and forest land in maple syrup production.

Program Payments are authorized:

For development of a complete Transition to Organic Production Plan that includes a completed a completed OSP

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where certified organic status has already been achieved,
- for transition of livestock only to organic status
- where land is already immediately eligible for certification. Examples: pasture, hayland or sugarbush which has not received synthetic products for the past three years.

Other Considerations:

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 138 have been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Fish and Wildlife Management Plan

Written - Code 142

Definition- A plan developed by a certified TSP for EQIP eligible participants who wish to gain an understanding of the Fish and Wildlife resources on their property. Special emphasis is placed on declining habitats and properties in target conservation efforts for threatened and endangered species or large wetlands for instance where a forest management plan isn't practical. Landowners who already have a current forest management plan may sign-up for a wildlife plan.

New Hampshire Practice Intent-

Develop a plan which outlines NRCS practices to enhance or restore priority ecosystems.

Condition Where Practice Applies-

On private lands which are EQIP eligible.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For all land which is EQIP eligible.

Program Payments are not authorized

- For multiple CAP plans on the same land use at the same time.

Other Considerations:

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 142 has been met in the "Deliverables" section.

Forest Management Plan

Written - Code 106

Definition

A forest management plan is a site specific plan developed for an EQIP eligible client, which addresses one or more resource concerns on land where forestry-related conservation activities or practices will be planned and applied. For landowners who have a current plan which doesn't map out key resource concerns such as invasive plants, excessive beech understory, areas needing TSI, forest trails etc landowners may sign-up for a forest management plan this will help update their current plan.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To increase opportunity for forest stewardship in New Hampshire through the following purposes:

- Meet Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) quality criteria for the identified resource concern
- Comply with federal, state, tribal and local laws, regulations and permit requirements
- Meet the client's objectives

Condition Where Practice Applies

Non-industrial private forest land

Policies

- Forest Management Plan (FMP): If an EQIP plan of operations addresses forestland, the participant must develop and provide NRCS a copy of a Forest Management Plan prior to applying a conservation practice. Payment must not be issued until the Forest Management Plan has been provided to NRCS.
- For the purpose of EQIP, the forest management plan must meet the NRCS standard for Code 106, Forest Management Plan. Other plans, such as Forest Stewardship plans, may be acceptable if the resource concern is identified in the plan. **EXCEPTION:** If erosion control is needed immediately to alleviate an existing problem that will likely be exacerbated by waiting another year, you may plan for erosion control practices without the resource concern having been previously identified in the forest management plan. All other resource concerns and associated practices that are needed but not specifically identified in a forest management plan may not be implemented in an EQIP contract unless the plan is first updated or amended accordingly. In all cases, a forest management plan must be completed prior to undertaking ANY implementation.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For development of forest management plans that meet the requirements of this practice standard and all the required elements of the NRCS 106 CAP Forest Management Plan Checklist. This component is a full and complete forest management plan which would include field data collection (timber cruise/inventory).
- For 'open land' acreage (e.g. old fields) may be included only if the land was walked by the forester and specific planning recommendations are made within the plan for forest establishment for wildlife habitat improvement. Open land may not exceed 20% of the forest land.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For development of other plans that do not meet the minimum criteria set forth for Forest management plans.
- For EQIP practices not outlined in the forest management plan.

Other Considerations

This practice facilitates the development of a forest management plan that will consider all associated forest-related resources to meet landowner objectives, including – but not limited to timber, wildlife, fish, water, and aesthetics. It is expected that additional forestry practices will be added concurrently in a separate contract or in subsequent years to address resource concerns identified through this forest management plan. The plans will be written by TSP consulting foresters and the plan will be certified by the TSP using the certification worksheet. The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 106 have been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Frequently Asked Questions:***Can I have two forest management plans on different tracts or in the same forested tract with different land uses?***

In the case where there are two separate parcels, two separate plans rarely will be funded unless it is very clear that both parcels are managed independently. Field Staff should consult with the State Office to gain approval in these situations.

When is it appropriate to have a landowner sign up for a Forest Management CAP on some land units and a Fish and Wildlife CAP on another?

This scenario is appropriate where different land units require different use and management recommendations due to the presence of a qualifying species, ecosystem restoration need or rare habitat type. Field Staff should consult with the State Office to gain approval in these situations.

This scenario seems most appropriate on larger land units where productive forestland is managed for timber and wildlife in one area and on other parts of the landscape threatened and endangered species habitat or rare and declining habitats (see Appendix D of NH Wildlife Action Plan) exist which would benefit from a wildlife inventory instead of a forest inventory. Forest Management Plans have a minimum acreage of 10 acres and fish and wildlife plans no minimum acreage.

What if I get a Fish and Wildlife CAP instead of a Forest Management CAP? Am I eligible for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)?

Yes, to qualify for EQIP forestry practices, the landowner needs a plan that addresses forest management, examples of plans that qualify are: Forest Management CAP (106), Fish and Wildlife CAP (142), Forest Stewardship Plans, Tree Farm Plans or equivalent.

Grazing Management Plan

Written- Code 110

Definition:

A grazing management plan is a site specific conservation plan developed for a client to address one or more resource concerns on land where grazing related activities or practices will be planned and applied.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To encourage development and adoption of prescribed (rotational) grazing by addressing resource concerns and meeting the objectives of the grazing manager.

Two key principles for prescribed grazing are: (i) subdividing pastures to provide adequate rest periods for forage regrowth and (ii) moving animals to new paddocks once a target minimum grazing height has been reached.

The grazing plans will include at least 2 scenarios for the level of management involved with rotational grazing. Include a scenario for a weekly rotation (weekly rotation) and an intensive rotation (either a twice-weekly rotation or a daily rotation).

The technical guidance on this page is also applicable to Prescribed Grazing Plans developed by NRCS staff.

Conditions Where Practice Applies

- this practice may be applied on lands where grazing and/or browsing animals are managed,
- only where grazing livestock will be utilizing vegetated pasture areas, not in a forested setting or newly cleared land that has not been reseeded.
- on land where biological control of herbaceous weeds or brush is desired. All plans involving biological weed control shall be approved by the state resource conservationist
- where resource concerns to be addressed include water quality, soil erosion or sediment control, etc., and are not based solely on plant health and vigor, or domestic animal health.

Program Payments are authorized:

- where 528 Prescribed Grazing payments have not been previously made for the same land units under any USDA conservation program, unless treating the resource at a higher level (e.g. moving from a weekly rotation to a twice-weekly rotation would be acceptable for payments).
- only where benefits in resource condition, including water quality, plant condition, species diversity, and/or soil erosion or soil quality will be realized.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for development of grazing plans where the predominant vegetation is shrubs and/or trees (greater than 50% canopy), or on newly cleared land that has not been reseeded.
- for silvopasture plans for FY13
- for development of grazing plans where the chosen method of grazing is continuous stocking,
- for development of grazing plans where the applicant has already developed a grazing plan and/or Prescribed Grazing System unless approved by the State Resource Conservationist. Example: if the applicant already practices Prescribed Grazing, and

only needs to split some paddocks or install some new watering facilities or animal trails, do not add the 110 practice to the contract, instead plan and contract the specific conservation practice(s) needed.

- for development of grazing plans which include wetland areas where prescribed grazing will result in the capability of planting annual crops where the capability did not previously exist (Food Security Act)

Other Considerations

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 110 have been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Integrated Pest Management Plan

Written- Code 114

Definition

An integrated pest management plan is a site specific conservation plan developed for a client to address one or more resource concerns on land where pest management related activities or practices will be planned and applied.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an ecosystem-based strategy that is a sustainable approach to manage pests using a combination of techniques such as chemical tools biological control, habitat manipulation, and modification of cultural practices and use of resistant varieties. Methods of chemical applications are selected in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and non-target organisms, and the environment.

Integrated Pest Management:

- Manages pests economically;
- Minimizes the risk associated with pest suppression;
- Produces quality commodities;
- Meets NRCS quality criteria for soil, water, air and plant quality;
- Complies with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations and permit requirements;
- Addresses operator's objectives

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To encourage development and adoption of Integrated Pest Management by addressing resource concerns and meeting the objectives of the client.

Condition Where Practice Applies

On all lands where pests will be managed

Program Payments are authorized:

- the IPM plan must be developed by a Certified IPM specialist

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For lands that have an existing IPM plan unless the plan to be developed offers a higher level of conservation or uses a new strategy for IPM

Other Considerations:

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 114 have been met in the "Deliverables" section.

Irrigation Water Management Plan

Written - Code 118

Definition:

An Irrigation Water Management Plan (IWMP) contains the strategy by which the producer will control the volume, frequency, and rate of water for efficient irrigation to promote the desired crop response and optimize the use of available water supplies.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied to provide the producer with a guide for the proper management and application of irrigation water resources.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice may be applied to all irrigated land.

The technical guidance on this page is also applicable to IWMPs developed by NRCS staff.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For Irrigation Water Management Plans developed by certified Technical Service Providers.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For Irrigation Water Management Plans developed by anyone other than a certified Technical Service Provider.
- For land that has an existing Irrigation Water Management Plan.

Other Considerations:

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 118 have been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Nutrient Management Plan

Written - Code 104

Definition:

Nutrient management plans document how nutrients will be managed for plant production. These plans are prepared in collaboration with producer and/or landowner and are designed to help the producer with implementation and maintenance activities associated with the plan.

The NMP is developed to assist producers in addressing water quality concerns and achieve production goals, while meeting all applicable local, tribal, State, and Federal regulations.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To document the farm's plan to manage nutrients (manure, organic by-products and fertilizers) by combining conservation practices and management activities into a conservation system that, when implemented, will achieve the goal of the producer and protect or improve water quality.

Condition Where Practice Applies

where management and conservation actions will be identified and followed to meet clearly defined soil and water conservation goals, including nutrient management. **The technical guidance on this page is also applicable to NMPs developed by NRCS staff.**

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for any agricultural operation where nutrients are applied to the land.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for applicants where a CNMP or NMP has already been developed, unless an updated plan is needed due to substantial changes in the farm operation since initial CNMP or NMP development.

Other Considerations:

- NMP must address a resource concern for operations of any size; pay particular attention to smaller operations to ensure that there is a resource concern and a need for a NMP
- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 104 have been met in the "Deliverables" section.

Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan

Written - Code 146

Definition- A plan developed by a certified TSP for EQIP eligible participants who wish to gain an understanding of how to develop and improve pollinator habitats on their property. Special emphasis is placed on development and management of habitat for native pollinators to improve pollination on agricultural operations.

New Hampshire Practice Intent-

Develop a plan which outlines NRCS practices to enhance or restore native pollinator habitat.

Condition Where Practice Applies-

On private lands which are EQIP eligible.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For all land which is EQIP eligible.

Program Payments are not authorized

- for multiple CAP plans on the same land use,
-

Other Considerations:

- The DC or the designee will review the plan to see that the minimum criteria for 146 has been met in the “Deliverables” section.

Conservation Practices: Specific Requirements and Guidance

Access Control

(no) Code: 472

Definition

The temporary or permanent exclusion of animals, people, vehicles, and/or equipment from an area.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Achieve and maintain desired resource conditions by monitoring and managing the intensity of use by animals, people, vehicles, and/or equipment in coordination with the application schedule of practices, measures and activities specified in the conservation plan.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies on all land uses.

Program Policies:

Program Payments are authorized:

- To restrict access to the use of forest/farm roads and trails by the use of a gate
- To install a gate to control access to caves and other natural formation that provide bat roosting and hibernation sites

Program Payments are not authorized:

- To exclude wild animals from agricultural lands (cropland, grazing land or farmstead)
- For gates for prescribed grazing systems. The payment rates for fence include any needed gates.

Other Considerations

Access Road

(Feet) Code: 560

Definition

A travel-way for equipment and vehicles constructed as part of a conservation plan.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To provide a fixed travel route for proper operation, maintenance, and management of conservation enterprises while controlling runoff to prevent erosion and maintain or improve water quality.

This practice will most commonly be used to provide for access and proper management of planned or existing conservation practices such as Waste Storage Facility, Heavy Use Area Protection, Composting Facility, or Forest Stand Improvement

Condition Where Practice Applies

Where access is needed to a conservation enterprise or measure (conservation practice), and to address erosion and sedimentation that negatively impacts water quality.

Policies

Access Road is considered a facilitating practice. Financial Assistance for Access Road is limited to the minimum amount and least cost alternative to facilitate other conservation practices that address priority resource concerns. Controlling erosion on existing Access Roads or re-routing poorly planned existing roads also addresses resource concerns and are approved uses.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for limited **site-specific repair** of sections of existing access roads that are eroding and causing a water quality problem (i.e., sedimentation of nearby wetlands/water courses),
- for new access roads and components as specified in an approved design necessary to support (but not limited to) the following conservation practices:

Compost Facility (317)	Waste Storage Facility (313)
Heavy Use Area Protection (561)	Agrichemical Handling Facility (309)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)	Critical Area Planting (342)
- for control of erosion adjacent to stream crossing sites,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- in forested areas for limited site-specific repair of existing sections of access roads where problems have been caused by past timber harvest and/or recreational activities **NOTE:** A more appropriate practice in most instances will be 'Forest Trails and Landings' code 655.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for installations not meeting the above criteria,
- for installations that are primarily for the operator's convenience or recreational purposes
- for installations that are for the purpose of increased crop production or ease of harvest,

- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations or to address a violation of state or federal law,
- for re-installation of existing access roads, except for limited site specific erosion control causing water quality problems,

Other Considerations:

- in a forest setting, if the existing road is improved (gravel or stone surface), it may be identified as an Access Road. If the road surface is of natural earth, it will be identified as a Forest Trail or Landing, and any fixes for erosion control will follow the guidance and payment schedules developed for that practice.

Agrichemical Handling Facility

(Number) Code: 309

Definition

A facility with an impervious surface to provide an environmentally safe area for the handling of on-farm agrichemicals.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To provide for the containment and isolation of spillage from on-farm agricultural chemical mixing, loading, unloading, and rinsing operations in order to minimize pollution of or harm to soil, water, air, plant or animal resources.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- The current management for handling of agrichemicals creates significant potential for pollution of surface water, groundwater, air or soil and a facility is needed to properly manage and handle the chemical operation,
- An adequate water supply is available for filling application equipment tanks, rinsing application equipment and chemical containers as needed for the operation,
- Soils and topography are suitable for construction.

Program Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for roofing constructed over the facility,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

Access Road (560)

Pest Management (595)

Nutrient Management (590)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for portable pumps,
- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations.

Anaerobic Digester

(Number) Code 366

Definition

A component of a waste management system that provides biological treatment in the absence of oxygen.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to biologically treat waste as a component of a waste management system. Additional benefits are to:

- produce biogas for energy
- improve air quality
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- reduce pathogens
- improve nutrient management.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies where:

- Biogas production and capture are components of a planned animal waste and byproduct(s) management system.
- Sufficient and suitable organic feedstocks are readily available.
- Existing facilities can be modified to the requirements of this standard or for new construction.
- The operator has the interest and skills to monitor and maintain processes or contracts with a consultant to provide these services.

Policies

- EQIP cost share is only eligible for the digestion of manure and other on farm wastes.
- The producer may sell electricity produced by the facility.
- The following screening milestones that must be met in order to advance from application to ranking (If milestones are substantially underway, the State Conservationist may waive this requirement):
 - An economic feasibility study has been completed;
 - Manure and Wastewater Handling Plan including a schematic of the planned system is complete;
 - Any practices required to address water quality issues on the tract where digester will be located will be included in the contract;
 - Conference has been held with potential funders (RD, NRCS, others) to delineate the EQIP role;
 - Funding plan that shows total costs and how EQIP dollars will fit into the mix, including letter from lender committing support for the project (commitment may be conditional on other funding);
 - Site survey has been completed by NRCS or a private contractor;
 - Plan is in place for engineering and construction management.

In addition, where electricity is to be produced:

- Application for Interconnection of Generation Resources has been submitted to utility if required;
- There is a commitment from an entity to buy the energy, OR a Section 248 Certificate of Public Good for net-metering;
- Producer will have to hire a non-NRCS engineer who is licensed in the state of New Hampshire. This engineer will be responsible to design and certify construction of the digester system which may include:
 - Waste Transfer of manure from the barn to the digester
 - Digester
 - Waste Transfer of digested manure from the digester to the separator
 - Solid/Liquid Separator
 - Waste Transfer of liquid manure from the separator to the waste storage facility
 - Any buildings necessary to house the digester, separator and other associated practices and to temporarily store separated manure solids.
 - Other practices and components necessary to successfully manage and operate the digester system.

The following must be communicated by the NRCS Conservation Planner during the planning process to all applicants considering this practice:

- New Hampshire NRCS is not able to provide the necessary technical support for design of anaerobic digesters. The applicant will be responsible for acquisition of all technical design support for this practice,
- NRCS should work jointly with the applicant and Rural Development (RD) as soon as possible in the process. This will help to ensure that each agency sets up funding for separate aspects of the overall digester system, and that we don't end up setting up contracts to cover the same items. This will also help our clients to maximize financial support from all potential sources early on in the process.
- Effective planning for digesters requires specialized knowledge and planners should seek help as soon as they know a producer is interested in a digester.
-

Payments are authorized:

- for practice components completed as specified in an approved design with the intent accomplishing one or more of the purposes listed above, including but not limited to: collection tanks, stripping, obstruction removal, excavation and compaction, hauled fill, drain fill, gravel fill, approved drainage measures (diversions, subsurface drains, surface drains, drop structures), seeding, mulch materials, lime and fertilizer as specified,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

Waste Transfer (634)	Roofs and Covers (367)
Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility (632)	
Waste Storage Facility(s) (313)	Pumping Plant (533)

Payments are not authorized:

- for the treatment and digestion of silage, crop residues, off farm wastes, or other “non-manure” type organics or wastes.

- for installations that are primarily for the operator's convenience,
- for connections to the electrical grid or any electrical components,
- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations,
- for power Generation Equipment,
- for buildings not associated with manure transfer systems or manure separators. A building for a generator and electrical facilities may be attached to the digester or separator building, but the cost of that section of the building must be borne by the applicant.

Other Considerations:

- Anaerobic digesters are frequently installed concurrently with a Solid Separator. Buildings and supporting practices may be associated with both.
- This practice will be maintained, at a minimum, for the designated lifespan of 25 years.

Animal Mortality Facility (Number) 316

Definition

An on-farm facility for the treatment or disposal of livestock and poultry carcasses.

New Hampshire EQIP Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- decrease non-point source pollution of surface and groundwater resources,
- reduce the impact of odors that result from improperly handled animal mortality,
- decrease the likelihood of the spread of disease or other pathogens that result from the scavenging of dead animals by predators,
- to provide contingencies for normal and catastrophic mortality events,
- composting of livestock mortalities will be the typical method used.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies where animal carcass treatment or disposal must be considered as a component of an approved comprehensive nutrient management plan for livestock or poultry operations and where end use of the product has been accounted for. It applies where on-farm carcass treatment and disposal are permitted by federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulations. This practice includes disposal of both normal and catastrophic animal mortality; however, it does not apply to catastrophic mortality resulting from disease.

EQIP Policies

EQIP Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to: Access Road (560), Diversion (362), Roofs and Covers (367), Obstruction Removal (500) Subsurface Drain (606), Underground Outlet (620)

EQIP Program Payments are not authorized:

- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations.
- for installations where the animal carcasses to be managed are not produced by the applicant's agricultural operation,
- for mixing, turning, or hauling equipment, or for thermometers,
- for any carbon source or bulking agent to process compost.

Other Considerations:

- Disposal or burial pits may also be used on approved sites. Types of animal mortality facilities, other than composting, must be approved by the State Conservation Engineer.

Animal Trails and Walkways

(Acres) Code: 575

This practice is not on the FY13 Cost List. Use Heavy Use Area, Gravel scenario for planning Animal Trails and Walkways. The general planning and practice intent information here is still applicable if the HUA is for animal trails.

Definition

Established lanes or travel ways that facilitate animal movement.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- provide or improve livestock access to forage, water, working/handling facilities, and/or shelter,
- improve grazing efficiency and distribution, and/or
- protect ecologically sensitive, erosive and/or potentially erosive sites.

Condition Where Practice Applies

On lands where control of animal movement is needed to facilitate access to approved water sources, prevent erosion, and/or protect ecologically sensitive areas.

Program Policies

Program payments are authorized:

- for existing or planned new sections of animal trail and walkway where improvement is needed due to existing or potential erosion, sedimentation and water quality impacts, or excessively muddy conditions,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where soil conditions and location of the planned or existing animal trail and walkway do/will not result in a reduction of excessive erosion, sedimentation, or water quality impacts,
- for practice components on sections of animal trail and walkway where improvement is not warranted: Example: 2,150 feet of animal trail and walkway is planned within a grazing system. 5 sections of the planned walkway totaling 750 feet require stripping, installation of gravel, geo-textile fabric and 2 culverts to protect soil and water resources and to maintain animal health. Only 750 feet of animal trail and walkway are justified for program payments in this example,
- for trails which will only be used occasionally. Example: Heifers using the trail a few times a year should not need a permanently installed animal trail. Trails should be limited to regular use areas only,
- for installations that are primarily for the operator's convenience,
- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations,
- for installations where the primary purpose is the movement of farm machinery or vehicles.

NOTE: The animal trail and walkway practice is not the same as 560 Access Road. These two practices will not be used interchangeably. Where the major resource problem is associated with livestock movement within a grazing system, the practice planned should be 561 Heavy Use Area, Gravel Scenario.

Other Considerations:

Aquatic Organism Passage

(Miles) Code: 396

Definition

Modification or removal of barriers that restrict or impede movement or migration of fish or other aquatic organisms.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Improve or provide upstream and downstream passage for fish and other aquatic organisms. Fragmented fluvial systems have been identified in New Hampshire's Wildlife Action Plan as a significant concern. Fragmentation of habitat includes within the stream as well as between the stream and riparian habitats. Fragmentation of the aquatic stream habitat in New Hampshire, typically undersized culverts and dams, leads to disruptions in life history of aquatic species. Projects that involve the removal or modification of barriers require both an assessment of the physical characteristics (geomorphic and hydrologic assessment) as well as an evaluation of the biological characteristics (status of targeted species). Due to the complexity of these projects, a multi-agency approach is encouraged.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- All rivers, streams, and outlets of ponds or lakes where barriers impede desired fish passage and the biological resource and geomorphic condition have been evaluated prior to development of restoration plan and contract.
- Where a reasonable amount of quality habitat will be made available through implementation of this practice. Consult with the State Biologist.

Program Payments are authorized for:

- projects that have been properly evaluated by the State Biologist and State Engineer installing structures needed to provide for proper functioning for fish passage, to protect the structure, and to protect outlets from erosion,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Subsurface Drain (606)
 - Access Road (560)
 - Grade Stabilization Structure (410)
 - Streambank & Shoreline Protection (580)
 - Critical Area Planting (642)

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- projects with little or no biological benefits,
- projects that have not been properly reviewed.

Other Considerations:

- Projects should be designed in a manner that also benefits semi-aquatic (salamanders) and terrestrial species that may use streams and shorelines as travel ways across roads.
- Reviews by the NH Fish and Game Department or US Fish and Wildlife Service fisheries or aquatic biologists are encouraged.
- Removal of existing obstructions and structures is included in practice scenarios.

Brush Management

(Acres) Code: 314

Definition – The management or removal of woody (non-herbaceous or succulent) plants including those that are invasive and noxious.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- Improve forest regeneration of desired species by controlling understory and over represented plants such as beech, hobble bush, moose maple and state listed invasive woody plants.
- This practice should also be used to mechanically or chemically treat the understory before a commercial thinning such as a shelterwood to improve forest regeneration.
- maintain or enhance wildlife habitat including that associated with declining, threatened or endangered species.
- improve water quality by improving forage, accessibility, quality and quantity for livestock on existing grazed or non-grazed pasture.
- Facilitate the installation of fence (382) or other conservation practice

Condition Where Practice Applies

On all lands except active cropland where the removal, reduction, or manipulation of woody (non-herbaceous or succulent) plants is desired.

Policies

- **Permits are required for herbicide applications in wetlands and within NH designated shoreland, in the public right of way and in aquatic habitats-In some instances the state may grant a permit for a private landowner to spray herbicide on their own property in these environments.**

Program Payments are authorized:

- for reclaiming field edges, fence rows, and shrubland habitat
- to manually, mechanically, and/or chemically control native and/or invasive woody species,
- to remove undesired understory species prior to a shelter wood or seed tree type cut.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- to create or expand grazing or cropland for agricultural production
- in wetland areas where brush management will result in the capability of planting annual crops where the capability did not previously exist, or has not existed in 5 or more years.
- where water quality benefits to grazing land enhancement are not documented.

Other Considerations: consult with appropriate parties as listed in Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation. Applications in early Fall are most successful when plants are reallocating above ground energy stores to the root system. Avoid spring and early summer applications.

Planners should consider that multiple treatments maybe needed and because NRCS will only provide 1 payment, be more conscious of costs and discuss this with landowners. Where multiple

treatments are needed, select difficult site + follow-up and provide payment after the initial treatment.

[NH Prohibited Invasive Species](http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/list.pdf) http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/watch.pdf

[NH Restricted Invasive Species](http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/watch.pdf) http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/watch.pdf

[Posionous Plants in Pastures](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000623_Rep645.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000623_Rep645.pdf

[Herbicides for Specific Weeds in Pastures](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000025_Rep25.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000025_Rep25.pdf

[Improving Pastures and Hayfields](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000031_Rep31.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000031_Rep31.pdf

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Lightly used shrubby pastures can provide excellent habitat for shrubland songbirds (e.g. field sparrow, eastern towhee and brown thrasher) and various types of other wildlife. Since declining populations of shrubland birds is a significant concern in the Northeastern United States, their habitat needs will be accounted for when planning and implementing this practice. This may include leaving islands of shrubs, forbs and grasses within pasture systems. Chemically treat vegetation in early fall after birds have fledged and plants are beginning to move energy stores to the roots. Mechanical treatments are best done in the growing season (during drought is ideal) to help stress the plant as much as possible.

Combustion System Improvement

(No) Code: 372

Definition

Installing, replacing, or retrofitting agricultural combustion systems and/or related components or devices for air quality and energy efficiency improvement.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through installation of on-farm energy conservation components or devices.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to agricultural and forestry operations where at least a 20% reduction in energy consumption can be expected from installation of equipment, components, or devices as a part of the production system. Reduced fuel consumption will then result in reduced emissions of oxides of nitrogen and/or fine particles.

Program Payments are Authorized for:

- Installation of new maple sap pre-heaters, enhanced preheaters, and reverse osmosis systems to enhance an existing maple sap processing operation for established maple producers.
- Installation of a more efficient greenhouse dual fuel furnace or gas heaters to reduce energy use and improve air quality at an existing green house operation.
-

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- Installation of practices for new maple production or greenhouse facilities.
- Replacement installations that will not result in a 20% decrease in energy consumption.

Other Considerations:

- Replacement system must be certified as being at least 20% more efficient than system being replaced or enhanced by NRCS or other designated representative.
- All maple pan pre-heaters and maple reverse osmosis systems will be sized, installed, operated and maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Requests for application of both a preheater and reverse osmosis unit shall be considered on a case by case basis.
- Producers shall obtain product and size recommendations from a supplier/manufacturer and provide to NRCS for consideration for the conservation plan/contract.
- Applicant shall submit equipment list to NRCS for approval prior to purchase and installation.
- Conservation practice certification for maple pan pre-heaters and maple reverse osmosis systems can be made once installation of the designated equipment has been verified by an authorized NRCS representative.
- This practice will be maintained, at a minimum, for the designated lifespan of ten years.

Composting Facility

(Number) Code: 317

Definition

A facility to process raw manure or other raw organic by-products into biologically stable organic material. This conservation practice was developed to facilitate composting of manure and mortality from livestock and poultry operations; however, it was not the intent to preclude its use on a farm without livestock or poultry desiring to process organic materials into compost.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

The Composting Facility Practice Standard is neither a Compost Standard nor a Composting Standard; it is a standard for a facility that will accommodate and facilitate a desired composting process.

- This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to treat waste organic material biologically by producing a humus-like material that can be recycled as a soil amendment and fertilizer substitute or otherwise utilized in compliance with all laws, rules, and regulations.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- where waste organic material is generated by the producer's agricultural operation and composting is a selected method of treatment,
- where a composting facility can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air and/or water resources,
- on farmland areas where agricultural waste from a farming operation constitutes a significant pollution hazard from nutrients, pathogens, weed seeds and gaseous emissions and odors
- where immobilization of nutrients and recycling of organic material is desired,
- where there is a need to improve air quality by reducing the emissions of odorous gases,
- where export of nutrients off-farm is necessary under a nutrient management plan,
- where the facility is operated as a component of an Approved Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (required for livestock operations unless they meet the CNMP exemption) or Nutrient Management Plan (required for operations without livestock)
- Financial assistance for 317 must be in conjunction with 3 years of 590 (Nutrient Management) as prescribed in an Approved CNMP or NMP.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- for operations that generate their own wastes to be composted, size will be based on waste generated on the farm.
- for operations that will use the end product in their own operation (size of compost facility must be commensurate with need),
- **only where site modification is necessary** to facilitate composting in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

- Subsurface Drain (606)
- Critical Area Planting (642)
- Fence (382)
- Grassed Waterway (412)
- Underground Outlet (620)
- Diversion (362)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for mixing, turning, or hauling equipment, or for thermometers,
- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations,
- for any carbon source or bulking agent to process the compost.
- for compost facilities for operations that do not the use end product (i.e., processing compost only), unless granted a waiver by the State Conservationist. To be granted a waiver, processing facilities must document that they are taking manure from outside sources that are required to export manure to meet CNMP requirements.
- where site modification is not necessary to achieve the composting practice in an environmentally sensitive manner. See stacking site criteria in Waste Storage Facility (313) Standard.

Conservation Cover

(Acres) Code: 327

Definition

Establishing and maintaining permanent vegetative cover to protect soil and water resources and improve native pollinator and wildlife habitat.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- Reduce soil erosion and sedimentation,
- Improve air, soils and/or water quality,
- Enhance native pollinator and wildlife habitat,
- Manage plant pests.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to any land needing permanent protective cover. This practice does not apply to plantings for forage production or to site requiring critical area plantings.

Policies

Conservation Cover (327) is not to be used to seed down recently cleared forest if the intent is to create new fields or grazing land. Wildlife openings seeded down with Conservation Cover must be used and maintained as wildlife openings for 5 years. Conservation Cover is used for controlling moderate soil erosion and to develop/improve wildlife/pollinator habitat. Use mulching (484) as an associate practice if needed. See guidance document for pollinators.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For moderate erosion control
- To create or improve wildlife or native pollinator habitat.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- To establish species considered noxious or on the invasive species watch list. Reed canary grass is not allowed.
- To establish plantings for forage production (512) or for critical area plantings (342).

Other Considerations:

Consider using wildlife friendly grass mixes and managing the area for early successional species of wildlife.

This practice will be maintained as a minimum for 5 years and from the planned date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract.

Conservation Crop Rotation

(Acres) Code: 328

Definition

Growing crops in a recurring sequence on the same field.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice requiring 3 years planned in a contract.

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- reduce sheet and rill or, if applicable, irrigation induced erosion,
- maintain or improve soil organic matter content and overall soil health,
- manage the balance of plant nutrients,
- improve water use efficiency,
- manage plant pests (weeds, insects, and diseases) ,
- provide food and cover for wildlife.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all cropland land where annually-planted crops make up at least one-third of the crop sequence (time basis).

For the purposes of this practice, a cover crop is considered a crop in the rotation.

Policies

Do not use Forage & Biomass Planting and Conservation Crop Rotation on the same land. All foregone income scenarios involve taking land out of production once every 3 years and growing a cover crop in that year. Use Cover Crop (340) as an associated practice with foregone income scenarios.

Program Payments are authorized:

- annually for a maximum of 3 years.
- for other practices needed to support this practice

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on land devoted to orchards, vineyards, or nurseries,

Other Considerations:

this practice will be maintained as a minimum from the planned date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract.

Cover Crop

(Acres) Code: 340

Definition

Crops including grasses, legumes, and forbs for seasonal cover and other conservation purposes.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- reduce erosion caused by wind and water,
- increase soil organic matter
- manage deficient or excess nutrients in the soil
- save energy through biological nitrogen fixation,
- improve overall soil health (*e.g.* compaction, microbial diversity, water holding capacity)

Conditions Where Practice Applies

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

Policies

A cover crop always addresses a resource concern. Payment is to establish grasses, legumes, forbs, or other herbaceous plants for seasonal cover and other conservation purposes according to the NH 340 Cover Crop Planting Specification Guide.

Program Payments are authorized:

- annually for a maximum of 3 years
- on fields that were not cover-cropped in the past 1 year; or on fields were cover-cropped in the past year but a new scenario/species is used or a different purpose is desired
- to break persistent weed cycles
- as a facilitating practice with Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Nutrient Management (590), Herbaceous Weed Control (315), or other practices

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on fields that are cost-shared for the same practice through other USDA contracts, or on fields where the scenario has already been adopted/implemented in the past year (i.e. if a producer is already using VNS winter rye as a cover crop, payments would not be authorized for fields that will be planted to VNS winter rye again.)

Other Considerations:

- This practice will be maintained (applied annually) as a minimum from the planned date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract.

Example situation: Producer is already using VNS cereal rye on all fields. Producer is eligible for Cover Crop payments if they will try:

- “Aroostook” rye instead of VNS cereal rye
- Aerial seeding any variety of rye instead of broadcasting

- Drilling any variety of rye instead of broadcasting
- Planting any other cover crop, including winter wheat or triticale (which can be planted late in the season)
- Frost or dormant seeding a legume into their rye cover crop
- Dormant seeding annual ryegrass or another other species/mix approved for dormant seeding
- Interseeding a legume into the cash crop

Critical Area Planting

(Acres) Code: 342

Definition

Establishing permanent vegetation on sites that have or are expected to have high erosion rates. Additionally this practice may be used on sites that have physical, chemical or biological conditions that prevent the establishment of vegetation with normal practices.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- stabilize areas with existing or expected high rates of soil erosion by water or wind,
- restore degraded sites that cannot be stabilized through normal methods, such as conservation cover.
- planned with forest trails and landings in erodible areas
- stabilize conservation practice construction sites

Conditions Where Practice Applies

To areas with sandy soils, steep slopes, flooded areas, compacted soils, poor quality soils which need high seeding rates, areas with high runoff and/or around sensitive habitats, and if left untreated, could be severely damaged by erosion or sedimentation or could cause significant off-site resource impacts. Critical Area Planting (342) is not to be used to seed down recently cleared forest if the intent is to create new fields or grazing land. Wildlife openings shall be seeded down with Conservation Cover, not Critical Area Planting.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the establishment of approved grasses and legumes
- for seeding areas that require additional fill and/or additional shaping
- for establishing vegetation in vegetated treatment areas
- for the least cost installation alternative (payment schedule rate) which will achieve the planned practice intent – this may be a different practice, like conservation cover.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for sites where conventional vegetation establishment (e.g. conservation cover) techniques will work,
- for measures which will not result in significant reduction of erosion and improvement of documented resource concerns,

Other Considerations:

Payments do not include mulch or erosion control blankets/netting. Use Mulching (484) as an associated practice.

Consideration should be given to wildlife, and where possible NH native grasses and legumes should be used. The acreage shall be maintained for a minimum of 10 years installation.

Deep Tillage

(Acre) Code: 324

Definition

Performing tillage operations below the normal tillage depth to modify adverse physical or chemical properties of a soil.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To improve fields with adverse soils conditions that restrict plant growth such as compacted layers caused by tillage operations or restrictive layers such as hardpans in the root zone. This practice does not apply to normal tillage practices to prepare a seedbed but is meant to fracture the compacted zone below the restrictive soil layer.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- This practice applies to land having adverse soil conditions which inhibit plant growth, primarily compacted layers resulting from tillage or restrictive layers such as hardpans
- This standard includes tillage operations below the normal tillage depth and commonly referred to as deep plowing, subsoiling, ripping, or chiseling. Deep tillage is not part of normal field operations and is generally performed only periodically.

Program Payments are Authorized:

- When soil compaction exceeds 200 psi (measured using penetrometer) or when recommended by the Cornell Soil Health assessment
- When restrictive layers/hardpans are identified by a soil scientist

Program Payments are Not Authorized For:

- This practice does not apply to normal tillage practices to prepare a seedbed.
- All fields on a farm, unless documentation of compaction or other concern has been documented for every field.

Other considerations:

- Cultural Resources review required as Deep Tillage is beyond normal tillage operations.
- This practice may be used with strip/zone till systems Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (329)
- Instead of mechanical deep tillage, use deep-rooted Cover Crops (340) like forage radish to reduce compaction and break up restrictive layers.

Diversion

(Feet) Code: 362

Definition

A channel constructed across the slope generally with a supporting ridge on the lower side.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- To divert excess water from one area for use or safe disposal in other areas in order to:
- break up concentrations of water on long slopes to control cropland erosion,
- intercept surface and shallow subsurface flow and concentrations of water on long slopes resulting in cropland erosion or water quality resource concerns,
- divert water away from livestock concentration areas, barns or agricultural waste systems to improve water quality,
- divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas,
- reduce downstream impacts or pollution from agricultural non-point sources,

Condition Where Practice Applies

This applies to all cropland and other land uses where surface runoff water control and or management are needed. It also applies where soils and topography are such that the diversion can be constructed and a suitable outlet is available or can be provided.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized for:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

Subsurface Drain (606)

Critical Area Planting (642)

Lined Waterway (468)

Fence (382)

Grassed Waterway (412)

Underground Outlet (620)

Structure for Water Control (587)

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- ditches or dikes designed to impound water for longer than 24 hours,
- diversions when a suitable outlet cannot be found,
- diversions where the affect is to drain or alter wetland areas.

Other Considerations:

- planner needs to ensure not to change the basic end outlet watershed: do not send water to another watershed.

Early Successional Habitat Development/Management

(Acres) 647

Definition

Manage early plant succession to benefit desired wildlife or natural communities.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

The purpose of this practice is to increase plant community diversity to provide habitat for early successional species. Target habitats include grasslands, old fields-shrublands and early successional woodlands.

The delayed mowing scenario is considered a management practice and the planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice scenario is available for 1 to 3 years.

Condition Where Practice Applies

On all lands that are suitable for the kinds of desired wildlife and plant species. Many of the early successional species will only be present in large areas (10+ acres) of similar habitat. This is particularly true for grassland birds. In forested settings, this practice will generally be implemented in non-commercial forest areas (aspen-birch-cherry) that are in the pole size class or smaller. Target age class in forest is 0-20 years (1-10" DBH). Also, this practice can be used for creating large forest openings to encourage regeneration of desired forest communities. For example, past high-graded woodlots often contain a dominance of less commercially valuable species and creating large forest openings can not only benefit wildlife but also future forest stand composition.

Policies

Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647) is a practice used to create or enhance wildlife habitat. This practice shall not be used to create new fields or pasture land. Obstruction removal is not an approved practice for wildlife openings. Wildlife openings and associated re-vegetation must be maintained for the lifespan of all practices including Conservation Cover (327) which has a 5 year lifespan.

Program Payments are authorized for:

- delayed mowing fields >10 continuous acres after August 15th,
 - for a maximum of 3 years for.
 - cutting/spreading requirements: all associated management including raking, baling and spreading of manure, must be completed after August 15th.
- Brush-Mowing Scenario is used for openings < 10 continuous acres every 3-4 years depending on soil productivity.
- to develop wildlife openings on forest land,
- Brush saw maintenance of shrublands
- Follow up brush saw treatments to encourage desired vegetation.
- Rotary Mowing to reverse succession in old field conditions
- Increase the density and improve the structure of shrubs.
- Feathering edges of fields at least 50 feet wide.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- Creating new fields or grazing land
- Opening areas for houses or livestock.
- Cutting high quality saw timber

Other considerations:

Grassland Management

- large acreages of contiguous grassland (>20acres, with square shape, >75% grass species, and <10% Reed Canary grass) and project sites situated near other grasslands have the most benefit to declining ground nesting birds. For pollinators mow every other year after the first hard frost.

Farmstead Energy Improvement

(No) Code: 374

Definition

Development and implementation of improvements to reduce or improve the energy efficiency of on-farm energy use.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To reduce energy use through installation of on-farm energy conservation components or devices.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to agricultural and forestry operations where a significant reduction in energy consumption can be expected from installation of equipment, components, or devices as a part of a production system and identified in an energy audit.

Program Payments are Authorized for:

- Practices identified in an energy audit (AgEMP CAP 122, 124 or other approved audit) and identified as scenario offered.
- Installation of practice scenarios to enhance existing production systems or replace existing components to improve energy efficiency in an established agricultural operation.
-

Program Payments are not Authorized for:

- Installation of energy practices in new agricultural facilities.
- Practices not identified in an authorized energy audit.

Other Considerations:

- Applicant shall submit equipment list to NRCS for approval prior to purchase and installation.
- All practices will be sized, installed, operated & maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Conservation practice certification for energy components can be made once installation of the designated equipment has been verified by an authorized NRCS representative.
- Practice payback period will ideally be between 2 and 10 years.
- This practice will be maintained, at a minimum, for the designated lifespan of ten years.

Fence

(Feet) Code: 382

Definition

A constructed barrier to livestock, wildlife or people.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice is applied to facilitate the application of conservation practices by providing a means to control movement of animals and people.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animal or people movement is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve the purpose.

Policies

- Fence used to exclude livestock from surface water or wetlands addresses priority resource concerns and is an approved use. A grazing management plan is not required for exclusion fencing.
- Fence is considered a facilitating practice for Prescribed Grazing (528). A grazing management plan is required prior to contracting fence to facilitate rotational grazing.
- Prescribed Grazing (528) shall be followed annually, for a minimum of 3 years, when Fence is cost-shared to facilitate rotational grazing.
- Total fence planned for rotational grazing purposes shall not exceed 4 acres per animal unit (AUE, 1000 lbs). Total feet of fence may vary due to the shape of the area being fenced, but in general the total area should not exceed 4 ac/AUE. For help determining AUE's, refer to Table 1 in NH Grazing Management Plan or Chapter 4 of the NRCS Animal Waste Management Field Handbook
- Safety fence is part of a waste storage facility or other practice to work as a constructed barrier to livestock, wildlife or people. It can be used for other purposes if approved by the State Conservation Engineer and State Resource Conservationist.

Program Payments are authorized:

- To provide permanent or portable fence to exclude livestock from wetlands or surface waters
- To create paddocks or subdivisions to facilitate rotational grazing
- To facilitate Heavy Use Area Protection (561), Waste Storage Facility (313)
- For internal permanent fencing when specified by an approved prescribed grazing plan

Program Payments are not authorized:

- to contain livestock in large pastures/paddocks without following a prescribed grazing plan.
- when the primary purpose is to separate ownership or exclude livestock from transportation networks, residential, commercial, or industrial areas,
- to replace or maintain existing fences that are still in good working order, even if the existing fence does not meet NH NRCS specifications.
- To exclude wild animals from agricultural lands

Filter Strip

(Acres) 393

Definition

A strip or area of herbaceous vegetation situated between active agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to reduce sediment, particulate organics, sediment adsorbed contaminant loadings and dissolved contaminant loadings in runoff from crop fields,

Conditions Where Practice Applies

This practice applies:

- in areas situated below cropland and pasture, or disturbed land, such as the farmstead
- where sediment, particulate organic matter and/or dissolved contaminants may leave these areas and are entering environmentally sensitive areas,

Policies

Use for filtering sediment. Use Vegetated Treatment Area (635) for filtering runoff containing agricultural wastes.

Program Payments are authorized:

- only if the measures will significantly reduce erosion, sedimentation, particulate organics or dissolved contaminants in runoff and maintain or improve the quality of water in a stream, lake, pond or other water source.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for concurrent Forage and Biomass Planting or Conservation Cover payments on the same acres.

Other Considerations:

- consideration should be given to wildlife
- to avoid damage to the filter strip consider using vegetation that is somewhat tolerant to herbicides used in the upslope crop rotation,
- filter strip size should be adjusted to a greater flow length to accommodate harvest and maintenance equipment,
- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 10 years from the date of establishment
- for necessary permanent vegetated strips between grazing land and water bodies, consider the use of the 327 Conservation Cover practice standard.

Forage and Biomass Planting

(Acres) 512

Definition

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of herbaceous species suitable for pasture, hay, or biomass production.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to establish adapted and compatible species, varieties, or cultivars to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- Improve or maintain livestock nutrition and/or health.
- Provide or increase forage supply during periods of low forage production.
- Reduce soil erosion.
- Improve soil and water quality.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies all lands suitable to the establishment of annual, biennial or perennial species for forage or biomass production according to the NH 512 Planting Specification Guide. This practice does not apply to the establishment of annually planted and harvested food, fiber, or oilseed crops.

A soil test on each field/CMU is required prior to the implementation of any scenario

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- on annual cropland being converted to pasture, hayland or biomass crops,
- On existing pasture or hayland that has been evaluated using the NH Pasture & Hayland Condition Scoresheet with a rating of fair, poor or very poor.
- for use on highly erodible (HEL) and non-highly erodible (NHEL) fields,
- for improving legume composition by frost seeding

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where vegetative cover will not be maintained for a minimum of 5 years (re-establishment of legumes during the 5 year period, if needed, is permissible)
- on fields that have are currently cost-shared for the same practice through other USDA contracts,
- on land with USDA payments scheduled under any program for any other grass/legume establishment practices including: 328 Conservation Crop Rotation, 393 Filter Strip, 342 Critical Area Planting, or 327 Conservation Cover

Forest Stand Improvement

(Acres) Code: 666

Definition

The manipulation of species composition, stand structure and stocking by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

It is intended that this practice support good forest management that supports long-term sustainable use of forest resources while improving the health of the forest including wildlife habitat, soils, and water quality. This practice is a non-commercial practice. Firewood removal is allowed so long as the wildlife habitat elements are addressed (leaving a number of stems on the ground and maintaining snags).

Conditions Where Practice Applies

On overstocked stands as described by a forest management plan or determined by the field planner or forester. Goals commonly are to release commercially desired species such as ash, oak, pine, sugar maple, birch, spruce and fir. Wildlife goals often include the release of cherry, apple, beech, hickory, and aspen. Forest restoration is also appropriate, by diversifying age classes, creating gaps through group tree selection, increasing coarse woody debris to the forest floor, and restoring composition of species after high-grades.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For non-commercial thinning of pole-sized stands with a mean stand diameter is 4-12” dbh or sawlog-sized stands. Goals often include forest health, wildlife benefit, and carbon sequestration. At least 30 crop trees per acre are released.
- For patch cutting in low quality stands to improve regeneration of desired species.
- To release mast trees for wildlife (at least 30 per acre).
- Marking crop trees or cut trees by a NH licensed forester to be cut commercially as part of a firewood sale or non-commercially as the standard “cut and leave” chainsaw work.
- The same acres may be marked by a forester and cut by a non-licensed forester and both payments are authorized.
- If a NH Licensed forester is running the chainsaw the trees do not need to be painted as part of making both payments. But the Forester is encouraged to mark the trees with paint or ribbon prior to cutting.
- For marking Cull Trees to be removed by harvest or girdled.
- Marking is authorized for marginal low revenue timber sales for improvement cutting to improve regeneration.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- Commercial harvests, where wood products generate revenue to the landowner above the cost of running the operation including the forester’s time and mobilization.
- Marking is not authorized for liquidation sales.

Other Considerations:**Wildlife**

Species Diversity: Retain den and nest trees during thinning operations. When in softwood stands (hemlock, spruce-fir, and pine), consider the potential impact to deer wintering areas in the upper pole size diameters and snowshoe hare at the lower size diameters in spruce-fir or white pine. Encourage landowners to girdle 4 trees per acre if a lack of snag trees exists and leave coarse woody debris to sequester carbon, increase insect populations, and improve amphibian habitat.

Forest Trails and Landings

(Acres) Code: 655

Definition

A temporary or infrequently used route, path or cleared area in a forest.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

- Develop and maintain existing temporary travel routes for landowners for management activities including non-commercial timber production, carbon sequestration, forest health and wildlife.
- To treat erosion on existing forest harvest trails and landings where harvesting is not actively occurring at site-specific locations. This practice will only be applied to a contract when stabilization of existing forest harvest trails and landings is needed to reduce soil erosion and/or negative impacts to water bodies.
- Stabilize and improve some of the skid trails after a commercial harvest to provide access for tractors and 4x4 pickup trucks.

Conditions Where Practice Applies

As prescribed in a forest management plan to facilitate forest management for improved timber and wildlife habitat management. Forest trails will not be installed solely for recreational activities. On forested areas where sections of existing harvest roads, trails, or landings are actively eroding and are in need of repair.

Policies

Forest Trails and Landings (655) is considered a facilitating practice. Financial Assistance for Forest Trails and Landings is limited to a minimum amount and least cost alternative to facilitate other conservation practices that address resource concerns. Controlling erosion on existing Forest Trails and Landings or re-routing poorly planned trails or landings also address resource concerns and are approved uses.

- **75 Feet per acre maximum, including existing or new trails not in the contract.**
- Forest Trail/Landing repair shall be planned only the eroding portions of existing trails and landings. This scenario shall not be used to rebuild functional trails and landings unless there are significant resource concerns.
- If new trails are required for wildlife or forest management activities, the trails must be developed to facilitate forest management for improved timber and wildlife habitat management as detailed in a forest management plan or fish and wildlife management plan.
- Stream crossings for Forest Trails and Landings shall be in-line with the temporary and intermittent nature of this practice. Acceptable temporary stream crossings for Forest Trails and Landings are culverts, stone fords and temporary pre-fab bridges. Permanent crossings, such as timber and steel bridges shall not be used on Forest Trails and Landings without approval from the State Conservation Engineer.

- Temporary bridges are included in the “Temporary Stream Crossing” scenario (see Other Considerations below). Consider streambank stabilization practice where impacts to the streambank are unavoidable.
- The location of trails to facilitate wildlife management shall utilize the least cost alternative to reach the targeted forest stands for management.
- Cross drainage culverts (12"-15") are allowed as necessary to stabilize trails and prevent off-site movement of soil. The cost of cross drainage culverts should be considered as included in the scenario.'
- Stream crossings will be avoided where possible, and the plan must demonstrate the least impact possible based on crossings and wetland impacts.
- Trails on steep slopes and HEL soils will be avoided or minimized.
- Soils properties will be used for locating fill material and planning routes based on coarse fragment content, bedrock, slope, fine earth fraction, and wetness. Soil Scientists will provide on-site investigations for potentially problematic locations for trails and landings.
- Areas with the potential to be vernal pools or jurisdictional wetlands will be avoided. The field planner will note areas of intermittent drainages, water stained leaves, seeps etc, and notify the landowner that wetlands permits maybe required.
- The logger or landowner is responsible for implementing and maintaining BMPs

Program Payments are authorized:

- To create new Forest Trails to facilitate wildlife habitat management and timber stand improvement when identified in an existing Forest Management Plan, where these activities require a new trail.
- To stabilize existing Skid Trails (using the Repair Scenario) for seasonal access for wildlife and forest health management activities
- To reduce soil erosion via, water bars, shaping and grading, and seeding.
- For the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- For moving sections of roads that are in a very poor location (e.g. on stream bank).
- For temporary stream/wetland crossings when consistent with BMPs.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- Facilitating forest and wildlife practice where forest trails are not needed.
- Separate segments of forest trails and landings planned without an approved stream crossings, where applicable.
- Recreational Trails
- Upgrading seasonal trails to “all season trails”
- Improving non-eroding skid trails on areas of the wood lot where management practices will not occur from several years.

Other Considerations:

Repair scenarios are NOT to be used for new trail installations without written approval from the State Resource Conservationist.

- **Repair Difficult**-this scenario is to be used on steep slopes (typically >25%) and severely eroded or rutted trails that require extensive earthwork, highly erosive fine textured soils (mostly silt loams in the CT Valley), extremely stony soils, and soils with

restrictive layers requiring additional ditching and water barring including cross drainage culverts ($\leq 15''$). Use this scenario on short sections that meet the criteria.

- **Repair Moderate**-this scenario is to be used on moderate slopes where there is significant erosion that can be conventionally treated with grading, shaping and BMPs. Soils are not a limiting factor.
- **New Trail and Landing Installation**- New trails must be developed to facilitate forest management for improved timber and wildlife habitat management as detailed in a forest management plan or fish and wildlife management plan. Typically the new trail will avoid adverse slopes and soils if this is not possible short sections of the difficult repair scenario may be incorporated with prior approval to address the resource concern.
- **Temporary Stream Crossing**- this scenario is to be used in conjunction with the new trail scenario where it is necessary to cross intermittent, perennial and other wet areas to complete the management prescription but will be removed upon completion of the management, typically less than 2 years. These crossings will conform to, 'Best Management Practices for Erosion Control on Timber Harvesting Operations in New Hampshire', January 2001.

Where necessary plan seeding, access road, access control and stream crossings as separate practices.

Grade Stabilization Structure

(Number) Code: 410

Definition

A structure used to control the grade and head cutting in natural or artificial channels.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- to stabilize the grade and control erosion in natural or artificial channels,
- to prevent the formation or advance of gullies, and
- to enhance environmental quality and reduce pollution hazards.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice is applicable in areas where the concentration and flow velocity of water require the installation of structures to stabilize the grade in channels or to control gully erosion.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for practice components completed as specified in an approved design or job sheet with the intent of accomplishing one or more of the practice intents listed above,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for practices that impound water for longer than 24 hours,
- for non-structural practices, except as components of the overall grade stabilization structure,
- for culverts installed under this practice.

Other Considerations

- Special attention shall be given to maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife where applicable
- planner needs to ensure not to change the basic end outlet watershed: do not send water to another watershed.

Grassed Waterway

(Acres) Code: 412

Definition

A natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established in suitable vegetation.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- to convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations without causing erosion or flooding,
- to filter runoff,
- to reduce ephemeral and classic gully erosion,
- to improve water quality.
- This practice is typically used to stabilize areas of ephemeral gully erosion in fields where annual crops are grown.

Condition Where Practice Applies

In areas where added water conveyance capacity and vegetative protection are needed to control erosion resulting from concentrated runoff and where such control can be achieved by using this practice alone or combined with other conservation practices.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for installation and removal of temporary diversions and other practices to divert water away from the waterway until permanent vegetation is established.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- **For installations intended to provide drainage of cropland, pastureland, or wetland areas.**
- For the clean out or reconstruction of existing field drainage ditches.

Other Considerations

- provide livestock and vehicular crossings as necessary to prevent damage to the waterway and its vegetation.
- Use Critical Area Planting (342) to establish permanent vegetative cover (lime, fertilizer, seed, mulching materials as specified)
- Use Mulching (484) for mulch or erosion control fabric
- the vegetative cover may consist of sod-forming grasses, legumes, mixtures of grasses and legumes or other types of vegetative cover that will provide the needed protection from erosion,
- planner needs to ensure not to change the basic end outlet watershed: do not send water to another watershed.

Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment

(Acres) Code: 548

Definition

Modifying physical soil and/or plant conditions with mechanical tools by treatments to reduce surface compaction and improve water infiltration on grazing land.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

Using an aerator or other state approved implement to break up surface compaction and/or break up sod and thatch on introduced forages. Aerator will improve water infiltration and aeration.

- Fracture compacted soil layers and improve soil permeability
- Reduction in water runoff and increased infiltration
- Break up root-bound conditions and thatch to increase plant vigor
- Renovation and stimulation of plant community for greater productivity and yield

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice is limited to Pasture or grazed hayland. These treatments shall be limited to soils and slopes where surface disturbances will not result in unacceptable levels of soil erosion and/or sedimentation. Prescribed grazing (528) will follow any grazing land mechanical treatment application.

Typically used as a stand-alone practice or in combination with Forage and Biomass Planting (512) to prepare soil for overseeding.

Program Payments are authorized:

- Up to a maximum of 3 years; however, it is not typical for this practice to be needed for three years, although it may be needed in some situations.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment on land that has not been grazed in the past 3 years, unless the treatment is prescribed in an NRCS prescribed grazing plan.

Other Considerations

The NH Pasture Condition Score Sheet and Soil Health Assessments may provide valuable information when determining if this practice is needed.

Heavy Use Area Protection

(Acres) Code: 561

Definition

The stabilization of areas frequently and intensively used by people, animals or vehicles by establishing vegetative cover, by surfacing with suitable materials, and/or by installing needed structures.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- reduce soil erosion,
- improve water quality,
- stabilize areas frequently degraded by livestock or agricultural vehicles,

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to agricultural areas which are frequently and intensively used and require treatment to address one or more resource concerns, including:

- where feedlots or barnyards are planned components of an approved Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan,
- agricultural areas subjected to frequent and intensive use which require special treatment to protect them from erosion or other deterioration, and/or
- where an animal trail/walkway is planned to facilitate access, improve grazing, prevent erosion, and/or protect ecologically sensitive areas (when the gravel HUA scenario is used for an animal trail/walkway).

Program Payments are authorized:

- only to treat existing water quality resource concerns,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Diversion (362)
 - Roof Runoff Structure(558)
 - Waste Transfer (634)
 - Waste Storage Facility (313)
 - Roofs and Covers (367)
 - Vegetated Treatment Area (635)
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- Financial assistance for 561 must be in conjunction with 3 years of 590 (Nutrient Management) as prescribed in an Approved CNMP or NMP, unless the practice is being used to install animal trails and walkways.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- installations that are primarily for operator's convenience,
- installations where water quality resource concerns are not present,
- roofed heavy use protection areas, where less expensive viable alternatives exist,
- where NRCS has previously addressed a water quality resource concern on the same farmstead area with a Heavy Use Area Protection practice under or any other program funded by NRCS since December of 2002 (extenuating circumstances will be reviewed on a case by case basis by STC). Example: A HUA bedded pack was installed in 2003

under a previous EQIP contract. Since that time a new muddy area resulting in water quality concerns has been created. The new muddy area is not eligible for funding.

- installations that do not meet local or state regulations.
- Installations for any type of storage, including vehicles, equipment, feed or other supplies.
- Installations intended for use by bison.

Other Requirements:

The State Conservation Engineer (SCE) or designee will review each application for this practice on site, where it will be used in conjunction with Roofs and Covers (367).

****A CNMP is NOT required when the HUA is planned as an Animal Trail/Walkway****

Other Considerations:

- a roof may be installed over a heavy use area for the purpose of diverting precipitation away from the area when no other practices are practical and cost effective; installation of a roof must be the least cost alternative. The roof and supporting structure shall be designed and installed in accordance to practice standard 367 – Roofs and Covers.
- additional practices shall be installed as necessary to divert surface water, to keep clean water from becoming contaminated, and to assure that the existing resource problem is not moved to a new area upon installation of this practice,
- prevent/control new erosion sites from occurring in areas adjacent to the new HUA,
- A CNMP (plan) must be completed prior to installing this practice.

Herbaceous Weed Control

(Acres) 315

Definition

The removal or control of herbaceous weeds including invasive, noxious and prohibited plants as listed by the NH Department of Agriculture and UNH Cooperative Extension.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

- Kill and control noxious and invasive herbaceous plants.
- Enhance accessibility, quantity, and quality of forage and/or browse.
- Restore or release native or create desired plant communities and wildlife habitats consistent with the ecological site.
- Protect soils and control erosion
- Reduce fine-fuels fire hazard and improve air quality

Condition Where Practice Applies

On all lands except active cropland where removal reduction, or manipulation of herbaceous vegetation is desired.

Policies

- Permits are required for herbicide applications in wetlands and within NH designated shoreland, near drinking water supplies, in the public right of way and in aquatic habitats- In some instances the state may grant a permit for a private landowner to spray herbicide on their own property in these environments.

Program Payments are authorized:

- For control invasive and noxious weeds and other herbaceous plants which will affect seeding success on all lands.
- For control of persistent or poisonous weeds in pasture and hay plantings that decrease the quality and quantity of the forage.
- For 1 payment every 5 years due to the lifespan of the practice.
- To prepare sod for planting of trees, shrubs or for seeding practices.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where control may cause harm to state listed plants and wildlife.
- to control common agricultural weeds in annual crops
- Repeated mowing of Phragmites without an herbicide application.

Other Considerations: consult with appropriate parties as listed in Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation.

Applications in early Fall are most successful when plants are reallocating above ground energy stores to the root system. Avoid spring and early summer applications.

Planners should consider that multiple treatments maybe needed and because NRCS will only provide 1 payment, be aware of costs and discuss this with landowners. Where multiple treatments are needed, select difficult site and provide payment after invasives are under control.

[NH Prohibited Invasive Species](http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/list.pdf) http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/list.pdf

[NH Restricted Invasive Species](http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/watch.pdf) http://www.nh.gov/agric/divisions/plant_industry/documents/watch.pdf

[Posionous Plants in Pastures](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000623_Rep645.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000623_Rep645.pdf

[Herbicides for Specific Weeds in Pastures](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000025_Rep25.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000025_Rep25.pdf

[Improving Pastures and Hayfields](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000031_Rep31.pdf) http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000031_Rep31.pdf

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Integrated Pest Management

(Acres) Code: 595

Definition

A site-specific combination of pest prevention, pest avoidance, pest monitoring, and pest suppression strategies.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

- Prevent or mitigate off-site pesticide risks to water quality from leaching, solution runoff and adsorbed runoff losses.
- Prevent or mitigate off-site pesticide risks to soil, water, air, plants, animals and humans from drift and volatilization losses.
- Prevent or mitigate on-site pesticide risks to pollinators and other beneficial species through direct contact.
- Prevent or mitigate cultural, mechanical and biological pest suppression risks to soil, water, air, plants, animals and humans.
- Evaluate environmental risks associated with a client's probable pest suppression strategies
- Assist clients to adopt IPM techniques that protect natural resources
- Assist clients to (i) inventory, assess, and suppress noxious and invasive weeds on non-cropland, and (ii) suppress weeds to ensure successful implementation and/or maintenance of permanent vegetative conservation practices (e.g., buffer type conservation practices)

Condition Where Practice Applies

- On all lands where pests will be managed.

Program Payments are authorized:

- to implement mitigation strategies for pesticides based on the WIN-PST hazard rating and the mitigation index scores outlined in Agronomy Technical Note No 5
- to implement a comprehensive IPM plan that uses prevention, avoidance, and monitoring techniques to reduce the need for pest suppression. Plan is developed with Cooperative Extension or a certified IPM consultant and typically involves record keeping, monitoring of climate and pest populations, basing sprays on economic thresholds, and using cultural techniques to reduce pest suppression
- as a payment on lands where pesticide mitigation strategies have not been developed or implemented
- for a maximum of 3 years on cropland (including fruits and vegetables) and hayland

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on cropland where only a 'Low' or 'Very Low' environmental hazard has been identified using WinPST and no mitigation has been identified, or
- on cropland where only a 'Low' or 'Very Low' environmental hazard has been identified using WinPST and a comprehensive IPM plan will not be implemented.

Irrigation Reservoir

(Number) Code: 436

Definition

An irrigation water storage structure made by constructing a dam, embankment, or pit.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to conserve water by holding it in storage until it is used to meet crop irrigation requirements.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- This practice applies only where it will be used to provide increased water use efficiency, in tandem with the approved replacement or upgrade to an existing irrigation system. Producer must have irrigation history for 2 out of the last 5 years. Application of this practice must not result in an increase in overall irrigated acres
- where water will be collected and stored only for a relatively short period of time.
- Where available water supply is insufficient to meet conservation irrigation requirements during part or all of the irrigation season.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent
- for installation of small irrigation storage ponds, or for approved storage tanks. Contact the State Conservation Engineer for further guidance.
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Irrigation Pipeline (430)
 - Pumping Plant (533)
 - Critical Area Planting (642)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- Where an improvement in irrigation efficiency is not achieved, unless otherwise approved by the State Resource Conservationist and State Conservation Engineer based on documented resource concerns pertaining to water quality that will be addressed.

Other Considerations:

- an Irrigation Water Management Plan must be developed before the installation of this practice and must be followed,
- practice components must be maintained for the life of the practice (15 years).

Irrigation System, Microirrigation

(Number and Acres) Code: 441

Definition

An irrigation system for frequent application of small quantities of water on or below the soil surface: as drops, tiny streams or miniature spray through emitters or applicators placed along a water delivery line.

This practice standard applies to systems with design discharge less than 60 gal/hr at each individual lateral discharge point.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose:

- to increase water efficiency by replacing or improving an existing, less efficient irrigation system, that has been used two out of the last five years,
- to improve water quality through more uniform distribution and amount of the irrigation water supplied.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies only where replacement or upgrade of an existing irrigation system will result in increased water use efficiencies.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for eligible appurtenances including but not limited to: totalizing flow measurement devices, water filtration devices, air vent valves, vacuum relief valves, pressure relief valve(s), water control valve(s), pressure gauges, pressure regulators, and pressure reducers.
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- For installations that meet the EQIP irrigation history requirement.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- to create new irrigation systems.

Other Considerations:

- practice components must be maintained for the life of the practice (15 years), which most likely will require replacing emitter tubes, etc., at landowner expense,
- where pesticides or fertilizers are delivered through the irrigation system, a Pest Management Plan and Nutrient Management Plan must be followed at a minimum for the acres included within the irrigation system
- an Irrigation Water Management Plan must be followed, and must be developed before the installation of this practice.

Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery

(Number and Acres) Code: 447

(No longer offered in FY13. This practice is a scenario under 436-Irrigation Reservoir, but the practice policy and guidance here is still applicable.)

Definition

A planned irrigation system in which all facilities utilized for the collection, storage, and transportation of irrigation tailwater for reuse have been installed.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose:

- to increase water efficiency by replacing or improving an existing, less efficient irrigation system, that has been used two out of the last five years,
- this practice will ONLY be used when documented water quantity or quality problems affecting wildlife, surface waters or domestic well water recharge exist due to overuse by the existing inefficient irrigation system,
- to conserve irrigation water supplies and improve off-site water quality, by collecting irrigation runoff and recycling it through an existing irrigation system.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies only where a properly designed and installed irrigation system exists and where recoverable irrigation runoff flows are anticipated.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- For installations that meet the EQIP irrigation history requirement.
- for other practices needed to complete this system may include, but are not limited to:
 - Subsurface Drain (606)
 - Underground Outlet (620)
 - Structure for Water Control (587)
 - Critical Area Planting (642)
 - Pumping Plant (533)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- to support new irrigation systems.

Other Considerations:

- practice components must be operated and maintained for the life of the practice (15 years).
- where pesticides or fertilizers are delivered through the irrigation system, a Pest Management Plan and Nutrient Management Plan must be followed at a minimum for the acres included within the irrigation system
- an Irrigation Water Management Plan must be developed before obligating a contract with this practice.

Irrigation Pipeline

Code: 430

Definition

A pipeline and appurtenances installed in an irrigation system.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose:

- to increase water efficiency by replacing or improving an existing, less efficient irrigation system, that has been used two out of the last five years,
- this practice will ONLY be used when documented water quantity or quality problems affecting wildlife, surface waters or domestic well water recharge exist due to overuse by the existing inefficient irrigation system,
- to improve water quality through more uniform distribution and amount of the irrigation water supplied,
- to convey water from a source of supply to point of storage where increased water use efficiency of an existing irrigation system will be realized.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies only where replacement or upgrade of an existing irrigation system will result in increased water use efficiencies.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for eligible pipeline as part of an approved design or practice job sheet
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to Pumping Plant (533) , Critical Area Planting (642) and Irrigation Storage Reservoir (436).

Program Payments are not authorized:

- to create new irrigation systems

Other Considerations:

- an Irrigation Water Management Plan must be followed, and must be developed prior to applying for practices.
- practice components must be maintained for the life of the practice (20 years) at landowner expense.
- For buried high pressure plastic pipeline to supply irrigation water to microirrigation systems only.
- Above ground pipeline applications only used under special circumstances as described in the practice standard.

Other Requirements:

Existing pipeline will need to be decommissioned sufficiently to disallow continued irrigation use. Refer to guidance provided.

Irrigation Water Management

(Acres) Code: 449

Definition

The process of determining and controlling the volume, frequency and application rate of irrigation water in a planned, efficient manner.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Irrigation water management is considered a management practice in NH. If NRCS provides FA for any part of the irrigation system, IWM is required for three years in the contract and the producer must keep written records of water use and provide them to NRCS when requesting payments. If FA is not provided for the irrigation system, the practice is available for 1-3 years based on the discretion of the planner and operator.

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose(s):

- manage soil moisture to promote desired crop response
- optimize use of available water supplies
- minimize irrigation induced soil erosion
- decrease non-point source pollution of surface and groundwater resources
- manage air, soil, or plant micro-climate
- provide for proper and safe chemigation or fertigation,
- improve air quality by managing soil moisture to reduce particulate matter movement

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice is applicable to all irrigated lands where an irrigation system adapted for site conditions (soil, slope, crop grown, climate, water quantity and quality, air quality, etc.) is being planned and/or is available and capable of efficiently applying water to meet the intended purpose(s).

Program Payments are authorized:

to implement IWM plans for 1 -3 years. If NRCS provide FA for any part of the irrigation system, the producer must agree to three years of IWM.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- unless efficiency improvements will be made to a current irrigation system.

Other Considerations:

- An irrigation water management plan is required prior to applying for any other irrigation practice (436, 441, 443 or 430).

Lined Waterway or Outlet

(Feet) 468

Definition

A waterway or outlet having an erosion-resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic turf reinforcement fabrics, or other permanent material.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose:

- provide for safe conveyance of runoff from conservation structures or other water concentrations without causing erosion or flooding,
- stabilize existing and prevent future gully erosion
- protect and improve water quality.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- where concentrated runoff, steep grades, wetness, prolonged base flow, seepage, or piping is such that a lining is needed to control erosion,
- where use by people or animals precludes vegetation as suitable cover,
- where limited space is available for design width, resulting in higher planned velocities and a need for an erosion resistant liner,
- soils are highly erosive or other soil or climatic conditions preclude using vegetation only.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include but are not limited to:
 - Underground Outlet (620)
 - Diversion (362)
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- To drain cropland, hayland or pasture for production purposes.
- for lined waterways in instances when other less expensive measures will provide sufficient resource protection.
- Where conveyance or outlet has a negative impact on surface water or wetlands.

Other Considerations:

- consider adding widths of appropriate vegetation to the sides of the waterway for wildlife habitat and for filtering of sediment and nutrients, and to facilitate turning of farm equipment to avoid damage to the channel of the waterway.
- several instances have been documented where planners installed a Grassed Waterway with a stone center and called the practice Lined Waterway or Outlet. These practices are not interchangeable. Note: the internal cross section of a Lined Waterway or Outlet is totally protected by erosion resistant material
- practice components must be maintained for the life of the practice (15 years) at landowner expense.

Mulching

(Acres) Code: 484

Definition

Applying plant residues, by-products or other suitable materials produced off site, to the land surface.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with the producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

- conserve soil moisture
- moderate soil temperature
- provide erosion control
- suppress weed growth
- establish vegetative cover

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all lands where mulches are needed. This practice may be used alone or in combination with other practices.

Policies:

Program Payments are authorized:

- for a maximum of three (3) years,
- where a mulching scenario has not already been adopted, unless a new type of mulch is used.
- to help conserve soil moisture and increase efficiency of an existing or planned irrigation system,
- to provide suppression of weed growth thereby providing environmental benefits associated with a pest management plan
- when practice is necessary according to a Soil Health Assessment
- provide for erosion control or seeding establishment on critical eroding areas or new conservation practice construction sites where mulching has not already been accounted for in a Program Payment Schedule use the straw mulch scenario for this situation.
- To control weeds and improve soil moisture for use with tree and shrub planting.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where the applicant has already adopted a practice scenario, except where a planned new conservation practice will need mulching to provide quick vegetative establishment and soil protection.

Other considerations:

- Biodegradable plastic mulches are generally not allowed in certified organic production. If they are allowed, they generally need to be pulled up at the end of the season.
- For “living mulch” scenarios, see cover crop.

Nutrient Management

(Acres) 590

Definition

Managing the amount, source, placement, form and timing of the application of nutrients and soil amendments.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Nutrient management is considered a management practice in NH. If NRCS provides FA for any part of an agricultural waste system and a CNMP is required, then implementation of the nutrient management portion of the CNMP is required for three years in the contract and the producer must keep written records and provide them to NRCS when requesting payments. If FA is not provided for an ag waste system, the practice is available for 1-3 years based on the discretion of the planner and operator.

- To budget and supply nutrients for plant production.
- to minimize agricultural non-point source pollution of surface and ground water resources by properly managing plant nutrient sources,
- to protect air quality by reducing nitrogen and/or particulate emissions to the atmosphere.
- to maintain or improve the physical, chemical and biological condition of soil.
- Soil Health Assessments are also available in 590. This option is not considered a management practice and is available for an initial and follow-up test (2 years after the initial).

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to lands where plant nutrients and soil amendments are applied. Soil Health assessments can be used on cropland, pasture and hayland, and in high tunnels.

Policies

In all cases, the Nutrient Management practice will be included as a component of the conservation plan for all applications and farms where a CNMP or NMP has been or will be developed. Soil Health Assessments are planned on an “each” basis and should always be planned with the appropriate “acres” crop scenario.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for a maximum of 3 years,
- for the producer to follow recommendations from UNH and the NRCS NH 590 standard
- for a maximum of 10 Soil Health Assessments.

Program payments are not authorized:

- when nutrient application rates exceed the CNMP or NMP recommendations.
- For soil health assessments on the same field in consecutive years (i.e. soil health assessments of field X should not be planned in year 1 and year 2, but can be planned in year 1 and year 3).

Other Considerations:

- this practice will be maintained as a minimum from the planned date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract,
- contract payments require annual submission of records,
- Soil Health Assessments for seasonal high tunnels should be conducted in the spring of year 1 and the spring of year 3. Contact NH NRCS soil scientists to schedule test.

Obstruction Removal

(Acres) Code: 500

Definition

Removal and disposal of buildings, structures, other works of improvement, vegetation, debris or other materials.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To safely remove and dispose of unwanted obstructions and materials in order to apply conservation practices.

Condition Where Practice Applies

On land where existing obstructions interfere with planned conservation practice installation. This standard is not intended for removal of obstructions from aquatic environments.

Policies:

Obstruction removal is considered a facilitating practice. Financial Assistance for Obstruction removal is limited to and minimum amount and least cost alternative to facilitate other conservation practices that address resource concerns. Obstruction removal, when used to remove material blocking water conveyance (and causing flooding), addresses a resource concern and is an approved, stand-alone, use.

Program Payments are Authorized for:

- A maximum of 1 ac of obstruction removal.
- Financial assistance is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.
- To facilitate installation of fence and watering systems for prescribed grazing.
- To facilitate installation of erosion control practices, water conservation and waste management practices.

Program Payments are not Authorized for:

- Stumping/rock removal for pastures to enable mowing
- Stumping/rock removal for early successional wildlife habitat openings
- Stumping/rock removal for seasonal high tunnels, as installation of the SHT is to be on existing cropland
- Trash and/or man-made debris removal.

Other Considerations:

- Associated conservation practice(s) must be operated and maintained for the entirety of their designated lifespan.

Pipeline

(Feet) 516

Definition

Pipeline having an inside diameter of 8 inches or less.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

- To convey water from a source of supply to points of use by livestock in order to:
 - improve water quality by distributing livestock water to approved watering facilities thereby reducing the instance of livestock access to streams and water bodies and redistributing animal wastes away from streams and water bodies,

Conditions where practice applies

Where it is desirable or necessary to convey water in a closed conduit from one point to another in order to:

- provide for increased manure distribution throughout the grazing system,
- to reduce livestock waste in streams or other water bodies,

Program Payments are authorized:

- for pipe materials, necessary fittings, valves, cutoffs, drain fill, as specified by approved design or jobsheet,
- for excavation and backfill of trenches where it is necessary to bury pipelines below frost to protect from animal or vehicular traffic.
- for pipelines originating at a barn or house and distributing water to a pasture water facility,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for pipelines to provide water for domestic use or to barns or livestock feeding areas within the farmstead area,
- for buried pipelines used for irrigation systems,
- for pipelines in excess of 2 inch diameter for moving irrigation water from a source of supply to a point of storage.

Other Considerations:

- This practice will be maintained as a minimum for 20 years from the date of establishment.
- Above ground pipeline applications only used under special circumstances as described in the practice standard.

Pond Sealing or Lining- Flexible Membrane

(No.) Code: 521A

Definition

A manufactured hydraulic barrier consisting of a functionally continuous sheet of synthetic or partially synthetic, flexible material.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To control seepage from water and waste impoundments for water conservation and environmental protection.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- On ponds and water storage structures that require treatment to control seepage rates within acceptable limits,
- On waste storage ponds and waste treatment facilities built in or of excavated earth, and which require treatment to prevent the migration of contaminants from the site.

Policies

Program Payments Are Authorized:

- For all flexible membranes that have been certified by the manufacturer to be suitable for the intended use.
- For all flexible membrane installations that met the material and installation requirements of the plans and specifications provided for each installation, and have been certified by the installer.

Program Payments Are Not Authorized:

- for use in ponds where the primary purpose or planned use is recreation, fire control, or aesthetics,

Prescribed Grazing

(Acres) Code: 528

Definition

This practice involves managing the controlled harvest of vegetation with grazing animals.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Prescribed grazing is considered a management practice in NH. If NRCS provides FA for any part of the grazing system, Prescribed grazing is required for three years in the contract and the producer shall keep written records as required in the standard and shall provide them to NRCS when requesting payments. If FA is not provided for the grazing system, the practice is available for 1-3 years based on the discretion of the planner and operator.

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- improve or maintain water quality and quantity,
- reduce accelerated soil erosion, and maintain or improve soil condition and fertility for sustainability of the resource,
- improve or maintain the quantity and quality of food, cover and shelter for wildlife and other animals of concern,

Condition Where Practice Applies

- this practice may be applied on all lands where grazing and/or browsing animals are managed,
- only where grazing livestock will be utilizing existing open pasture areas, not in a forested setting or on newly cleared land (must be cleared and seeded down by producer prior to NRCS providing any assistance).
- resource concerns to be addressed must include water quality, erosion control, etc., and must not be based solely on plant health and vigor, or domestic animal health.

Practice Policies

Prescribed grazing should not be planned for operations planning continuous stocking (no rotation). Requires grazing plan meeting the 528 standard or 110 Conservation Activity Plan standard. Rotational grazing scenarios involve moving livestock:

Weekly: at least once a week

Twice Weekly: at least two times a week

Daily: every day or more than once a day

Program Payments are authorized:

- where a 110 Grazing Management Plan will be written, 528 will be scheduled following development of the GMP,
- to implement an existing grazing system plan, that meets the 110 GMP requirements,
- on predominantly open existing pastures,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

Forage and Biomass Planting (512)

Fence (382)

Watering Facility (614)

Spring Development (574)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where benefits in resource condition, including water quality and/or soil erosion or soil quality, will not be realized,
- where the predominant vegetation is shrubs and/or trees, or where the land was cleared from predominant vegetation of shrubs and/or trees within the last 5 years, unless approved by the State Resource Conservationist
- where the chosen method of grazing is continuous stocking,
- in wetland areas where prescribed grazing will result in the capability of planting annual crops where the capability did not previously exist.
- Where prescribed grazing will create new water quality or soil erosion concerns.

Other Considerations:

Pumping Plant

(Number) Code: 533

Definition

A pumping facility installed to transfer water for a conservation need.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support the following purpose:

- provide a dependable water source, where necessary, for grazing livestock.
- Note: Pumping plant must be the only feasible and least cost option.
- in order to decrease water quality concerns associated with diesel or gasoline storage or use near water supplies.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- Where water must be pumped in order to provide a dependable water supply for grazing livestock or to an irrigation system where the land has been irrigated at least 2 of the last 5 years,

Pumps to facilitate prescribed grazing and watering facility practices and irrigation. Electrical hook-ups are not cost shared.

Practice Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- Irrigation pumps that are part of an existing irrigation system resulting in overall improvement in irrigation efficiency; OR, where water quality can be improved by replacing diesel or gasoline pumps with propane or electric pumps.
- for the 'Nose Pump' payment option, according to an approved job sheet, and only where it is the only viable alternative, and where the pumps will be mounted on a 'raised mount' to help prevent livestock from stepping in, or defecating on the water bowl,
- for a maximum of 4 nose pumps per contract, unless otherwise approved by STATE RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST,
- for portable pumping equipment,
- if use of portable equipment will reduce costs by eliminating the need to install more than one piece of fixed equipment, or
- a portable pump is needed to supply water so grazing livestock may be excluded from a stream(s):
- if the area is subject to flooding, or
- the grazing plan calls for moving the pump to another location to allow better grazing distribution,
- for solar pumps where other power sources are impractical and the solar pump will address multiple resource concerns [manual 515.91-H (x)],
- for pipes, concrete, reinforced concrete walls or slabs, or other components in an approved design,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

- for permanently installed devices including floats or other approved appurtenances where necessary.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for portable pumps, unless authorized by the State Conservation Engineer and meets the criteria above.
- Irrigation pumps for new irrigation systems, or to replace an existing pump where improvement to the irrigation efficiency is not achieved or does not meet water quality criteria stated above
- where an improvement in irrigation efficiency is not achieved, unless otherwise approved by the State Resource Conservationist and State Conservation Engineer based on documented resource concerns pertaining to water quality that will be addressed.

Other Considerations:

- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 15 years from the date of establishment.

Residue Management, Mulch till

(Acres) Code: 345

Definition

Managing the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residue on the soil surface year round while limiting the soil-disturbing activities used to grow crops in systems where the entire field surface is tilled prior to planting.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years. Typically this practice involves elimination of moldboard plow and the adoption of tillage methods such as chiseling, disking, or aerating which maintain significant amounts of plant residues on the soil surface.

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- reduce sheet and rill or wind erosion,
- reduce soil particulate emissions,
- maintain or improve soil condition,
- increase plant-available moisture,
- provide food and escape cover for wildlife.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all cropland and other land where crops are planted, and where documented resource concerns will be addressed by implementation of this practice. It applies to tillage for annually planted crops and to tillage for planting perennial crops.

Practice Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for a maximum of 3 years,
- as a payment for adoption of the practice on fields where it has not already been adopted,
- on land having scheduled concurrent program payments for the following practices: 328 Conservation Crop Rotation, 340 Cover Crop.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on land where this practice has already been adopted or cost shared under any USDA Program,

Other Considerations:

- this practice will be maintained as a minimum from the date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract unless the acreage is seeded to a long term stand of grasses or legumes.

Residue Management, No Till, Strip Till, Direct Seed

(Acres) 329

Definition

Managing the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residue on the soil surface year round while limiting soil disturbing activities to only those necessary to place nutrients, condition residue and plant crops.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- reduce sheet and rill erosion.
- reduce wind erosion.
- improve soil organic matter content.
- reduce CO₂ losses from the soil.
- reduce soil particulate emissions.
- increase plant-available moisture.
- provide food and escape cover for wildlife.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all cropland and other land where crops are planted.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for a maximum of three years,
- as a payment to adopt this practice on fields where it has not already been adopted,
- only where STIR rating will be reduced to 30 or lower.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on fields where the practice has already been adopted or cost shared under any USDA Program,
- where STIR rating will be higher than 30.

Other Considerations

- this practice will be maintained as a minimum from the date of establishment through the lifespan of the contract unless the acreage is seeded to a long term stand of grasses or legumes.

Residue Management, Seasonal

(Acres) Code: 344

Definition

Managing the amount, orientation, and distribution of crop and other plant residues on the soil surface during a specified period of the year.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This is a management practice. The planner should work with a producer to determine the appropriate number of years for the contract. This practice is available for 1 to 3 years.

Typically this practice involves the elimination of a fall plow (No tillage occurs after crop harvest until just prior to planting the next crop)

- Reduce sheet and rill erosion.
- Improve Soil Condition
- Reduce off-site transport of sediment, nutrients or pesticides.
- Manage snow to increase plant available moisture.
- Provide food and escape cover for wildlife.

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies to all cropland including cropland where biomass is removed for biofuel feedstocks.

Seasonal residue management includes managing residues of annual crops from harvest until the residue is:

- Buried by tillage for seedbed preparation
- Removed by grazing, or
- Mechanically removed
- It also includes the management of residues from biennial or perennial seed crops from the time of seed harvest until regrowth begins the next season.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for a maximum of three years,
- as a payment to adopt this practice on fields where it has not already been adopted,
- only where STIR rating will be reduced to 30 or lower.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- on fields where the practice has already been adopted or cost shared under any USDA Program,
- where STIR rating will be higher than 30.

Other Considerations

Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats

(Acres) Code: 643

Definition

To develop wild oyster reefs by placing shell at 100 tons per acre, and 300 bags of spat on shell as an over seeding technique.

New Hampshire Practice Intent:

To improve water quality by restoring oyster habitat in Great Bay, NH.

Condition where practice applies:

On EQIP eligible lands where the producer has control of the land from an approved State Lease. These practices can be used independently where needed. Planners shall involve the State Biologist during the early phases of the planning process.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- After shell is put on the bottom of Great Bay at locations approved by NH Oyster Partnerships.
- After viable spat on shell is placed on a hard substrate in Great Bay. Note:

Program Payments are not authorized:

- When the site has not been analyzed by the NH Oyster partnership for viability.

Riparian Forest Buffer

(Acres) Code: 391

Definition

An area of predominantly trees and/or shrubs located adjacent to and up-gradient from watercourses or water bodies.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- create shade to lower water temperatures to improve habitat for aquatic organisms,
- provide a source of detritus and large woody debris for aquatic and terrestrial organisms,
- create wildlife habitat and establish wildlife corridors,
- reduce excess amounts of sediment, organic material, nutrients and pesticides in surface runoff and reduce excess nutrients and other chemicals in shallow ground water flow,
- provide protection against scour erosion within the floodplain,
- restore natural riparian plant communities,
- moderate winter temperatures to reduce freezing of aquatic over-wintering habitats,
- increase carbon storage.
- Increase floodplain roughness, reduce water velocities, and capture bed load.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- On areas adjacent to permanent or intermittent streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and areas with ground water recharge that are capable of supporting woody vegetation. Typically for use on 3rd order or higher streams, seek state office approval for smaller order streams.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for eligible tree or shrub seedlings or transplants at a spacing specified in an approved plan, planting, seeding of eligible herbaceous plants, mulch material, and installation of tree/seedling guards
- On active agricultural site being taken out of production to install a buffer – as this practice included foregone income. Other sites should use tree and shrub planting payment rate, but follow the planning guidance for riparian forest buffer.

Other Considerations

- On severely eroding banks set containers and planting stock 10-20 feet from edge to compensate for seasonal losses until plants are established.
- Use tree and shrub planting live stakes scenario to increase planting density for problem areas.
- This practice will be maintained as a minimum for 15 years from the date of establishment.
- Job Sheets are available on EFOTG
- If Zone 3 is desired, use filter strip or conservation cover to establish the desired acreage and community.

Roof Runoff Structure

(Number) Code: 558

Definition

Structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as a part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- improve water quality,
- reduce soil erosion,
- protect other conservation practices,

This practice is typically used to prevent relatively clean roof runoff water from becoming contaminated by flowing across concentrated waste areas, barnyards, roads, and alleys.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies where:

- roof runoff structures are a component of an existing or planned Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan,
- roof runoff needs to be diverted away from structures or contaminated areas,
- there is a need to collect, control, and transport runoff from roofs to a stable outlet,
- roof runoff is collected and used for other conservation purposes.

Policies:

Only for clean water separation around livestock facilities and seasonal high tunnels.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for other conservation practices needed to support this practice including but not limited to:
Underground Outlet (620), Waterway (412),
Filter Strip (393),

Program Payments are not authorized:

- solely for the purpose of protecting the structure; identifiable resource concerns including water quality or soil erosion/sediment control must be addressed by the practice,

Other Considerations:

- in situations where roofs are to be constructed over Heavy Use Protection Areas, the roof shall be designed and installed in accordance to practice standard 367 – Roofs and Covers (not Roof Runoff Structure)
- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 15 years from the date of establishment.

Roofs and Covers

(Number) Code: 367

Definition

A fabricated rigid, semi-rigid, or flexible membrane over a waste treatment or storage facility or a heavy use protection area.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to:

- To cover a waste storage or treatment facility or a heavy use protection area for improvement of water quality or air quality impairments.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- where exclusion of precipitation from an animal waste storage or treatment facility or a heavy use protection area (HUA) will improve water quality or management of an existing or planned system,

Policies

NRCS employees must have the appropriate engineering job approval authority to plan this practice as part of the conservation plan and schedule of operations. If the NRCS employee does not have the appropriate engineering job approval authority, the I&E must be conducted with the assistance of someone who does. The program applicant must also provide a NH PE stamped design for this practice prior to contract obligation. Once the contract is approved and obligated, an NRCS engineer will review and approve the design. The NRCS engineer will also provide construction inspection services during installation and an as-built survey of the completed practice.

Program Payments are authorized:

- only where a water quality concern is being addressed,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for a roof over a heavy use protection area or a waste storage facility, following all requirements listed below in other requirements and considerations.

Program Payments are not authorized for:

- installations that are primarily for operator's convenience,
- installations where water quality resource concerns are not present,
- roofed heavy use protection areas that serve as the only livestock housing structure,

Other Considerations:

- a roof may be installed over a heavy use area for the purpose of diverting precipitation away from the area when no other practices are practical and cost effective; installation of a roof must be the least cost alternative. The roof and supporting structure shall be designed and installed in accordance to practice standard 367 – Waste Facility Cover.
- additional practices shall be installed as necessary to divert surface water, to keep clean water from becoming contaminated, and to assure that the existing resource problem is not moved to a new area upon installation of this practice,.
- prevent/control new erosion sites from occurring in areas adjacent to the new HUA.

Seasonal High Tunnel

(SQ. FT) Code: 798

Definition

A seasonal polyethylene covered structure that is used to cover crops to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice maybe applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following:

- Improve plant quality
- Improve soil quality
- Reduced nutrient and pesticide transport
- Improve air quality through reduced transportation inputs
- Reduce energy use through local consumption

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies to existing cropland where extension of growing season is needed due to climate conditions and crops can be grown in the natural soil profile. Permanently raised beds may be installed to improve soil condition, fertility, and agri-ability access, but does not apply to crops not grown in the natural soil profile (i.e. tables/benches, portable pots, etc.).

The practice does not include greenhouses or low tunnel systems that may cover single crop rows.

Policies:

- Tunnels must be gothic-style and meet the criteria listed on NH 789 Approved Product List and Selection Criteria.
- All tunnels will be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. All designs must be approved by NRCS.
- Vegetables and fruits shall be grown in the natural soil profile or in raised beds. Container crops are not permitted.
- Tunnels shall be installed on cropland with suitable, natural soils. Tunnels shall not be installed on steep slopes (>10%) or when shallow soil depth to ledge/bedrock or other extreme soil conditions do not allow posts to be embedded to the appropriate depth.
- Soil may be amended with artificial media (<10%), but shall not consist entirely of an artificial medium.
- Tunnel must be maintained according to NRCS specifications for a period of 4 years.
- Electricity, mechanical ventilation and heating are allowed, but NRCS will not provide financial assistance for these items.
- The tunnel shall not be used to house livestock or farm equipment (e.g. tractors, field equipment).
- If a seasonal high tunnel is moved during the practice lifespan (4 years), it may only be relocated to land the meets land eligibility requirements and this is included in the approved contract.

Program Payments are authorized:

- only on models with galvanized steel frames, bows and ground posts that meet ALL the criteria/specifications listed in the NH-798 Job Sheet and Specifications.
- for structures that are larger than 2178 sq. ft. but practice payments are limited to this maximum of 2178 sq. ft.
- for multiple smaller tunnels, but practice payments are limited to 2178 sq. ft.
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:

Roof Runoff Structure (558)	Nutrient Management (590)
Micro-irrigation System (441)	Critical Area Planting (342)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for structures with cemented ground-posts
- for structures using wood, plastic or aluminum frames, bows or ground posts
- for non-commercially manufactured structures
- for rolling tunnels that are not designed by the manufacturer.
- for structures where the plants are growing in pots or on tables/benches
- for structures that will house livestock or large farm equipment (trucks, tractors, etc...)

Sediment Basin

(Number) Code: 350

Definition

A basin constructed with an engineered outlet, formed by an embankment or excavation or a combination of the two.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To preserve the capacity of reservoirs, ditches, canals, diversions, waterways and streams; to prevent deposition on bottom lands and developed areas; to trap sediment originating from construction sites or other disturbed areas; and/or to reduce or abate pollution by providing basins for deposition and storage of silt, sand, gravel, stone, agricultural wastes and other detritus.

Condition where practice applies:

- This practice applies to construction sites, agricultural land, and other disturbed lands:
- Where physical conditions or land ownership precludes treatment of a sediment source by the installation of erosion-control measures.
- Where a sediment basin offers the most practical solution.

Policies

Payments are Authorized for:

- For the least-cost alternative that will achieve the planned practice intent
- For other practices needed to support this practice which may include but are not limited to:
Obstruction Removal (500) Subsurface Drain (606)

Payments are not authorized for:

- Installations intended to provide drainage of cropland, pastureland, or wetland areas.

Other Considerations:

- Practice components must be maintained for the 10 year lifespan of the practice.

Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility

(No.) 632

Definition

A filtration or screening device, settling tank, settling basin, or settling channel used to separate a portion of solids from a liquid waste stream.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To partition solids, liquids, and their associated nutrients as part of a conservation management system to:

- Improve or protect air quality
- Improve or protect water quality
- Improve or protect animal health
- Meet management objectives

Conditions Where Practice Applies

This practice applies where solid/liquid separation will:

- remove solids from the liquid waste stream as a primary treatment process and allow further treatment processes to be applied such as composting,
- allow partly digested feed to be separated from the liquid waste stream so that it can be used as a feed supplement or for bedding,
- reduce problems associated with solids accumulation in liquid storage facilities,
- reduce solids in stored liquids to better facilitate land application of liquids using irrigation techniques,
- assist with partitioning nutrients in the waste stream to improve nutrient management.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for other practices needed to support this practice including, but not limited to:
Waste Transfer (634) Waste Storage Facility (313)
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for the purpose of reducing total energy consumption by using solids for bedding,
- for the purpose of reducing storage **IF** it will eliminate the need to expand an existing pit or construct a new one.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where the objective is primarily for commercial sale of solids (most of the solids are leaving the farm and this is not required by the NMP).

Other Considerations:

- this practice will be maintained a minimum of 15 years from the date of establishment.

Spring Development

(Number) Code: 574

Definition

Utilizing springs and seeps to provide water for a conservation need.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- improve the availability of water for grazing livestock, where added benefits to water quality will be achieved,
- improve the distribution of grazing animals in a prescribed grazing system, where added benefits to water quality will be achieved,
- protect water quality in streams, lakes or ponds by providing an alternative source of water for grazing livestock,
- increase the quantity and quality of water for grazing livestock, where added benefits to water quality will be achieved,

Conditions where practice applies

In areas where spring or seep development will provide a dependable supply of suitable water for the planned times of use, and where the intended purpose can be achieved by using this practice alone or combined with other conservation practices.

Policies

For livestock water. Use pumping plant practice when necessary.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for other practices needed to support this practice including, but not limited to:
 - Watering Facility (614)
 - Pipeline (516)
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for roofs over the spring or a pumping area
- for electrical lines.
- To support irrigation systems.

Other Considerations:

- all spring developments should be examined to verify whether they qualify for Wetland “Minimal Effect Determination”. If they are located in a wetland and do not qualify for this exemption, they may constitute a converted Wetland under ‘Swampbuster’ provisions and will not be eligible,
- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 10 years from the date of establishment

Stream Crossing

(Number) Code: 578

Definition

A stabilized area or structure constructed across a stream to provide a travel way for livestock, equipment, or farm vehicles.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- improve water quality by reducing sediment, nutrient, organic, and inorganic loading of the stream,
- reduce streambank and streambed erosion,
- provide a crossing for access to another land unit to conduct resource conservation/management activities.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies to all land uses where an intermittent or perennial watercourse exists and a ford, bridge, or culvert (greater than 30" diameter) type crossing is necessary for livestock and /or equipment.

Policies

All bridges require the I&E be conducted with assistance from a member of the engineering staff with appropriate EJAA. The I&E findings must demonstrate that it's the least cost alternative.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for those streams which are displayed as blue lines on the USGS Quad Maps or if the drainage area at the point of the planned practice is greater than 20 acres,
- for improved stream crossings for livestock within a prescribed grazing system,
- for control of erosion on existing stream crossing sites, for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent ,
- for other practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Subsurface Drain (606)
 - Access Road (560)
 - Grade Stabilization Structure (410)
 - Streambank & Shoreline Protection (580)
 - Critical Area Planting (642)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for farm vehicle crossings in areas which have not been used previously as crossings unless the removal of a previous crossing site will result in enhanced water quality and streambed or stream bank protection,
- for installations that are primarily for the operator's convenience,
- for installations that are for the purpose of increased crop production or ease of harvest,
- for installations where improvement in resource condition (water quality, soil erosion, etc.) cannot be documented

- for temporary crossings,
- for installation of permanent bridges on Forest Trails and Landings without approval of the State Conservation Engineer
- for installations that do not meet local or state regulations For cross-drainage on Forest Trails and Landings.

Other Considerations:

- evaluate the need for safety measures such as guardrails at culvert or bridge crossing, or water depth signage at ford crossings,
- use of bridges or culverts also designed for fish passage must be authorized by the State Conservation Engineer in consultation with the State Biologist and a state and or federal fisheries or aquatic biologist.
- Planners and designers must work in coordination with NH-DES to address any permitting issues.
- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 10 years from the date of establishment.

Streambank and Shoreline Protection

(Feet) Code: 580

Definition

Treatment(s) used to stabilize and protect banks of streams or constructed channels, and shorelines of lakes or reservoirs.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice is ONLY to be used as an associated practice with CPS 578 Stream Crossing (bridge scenario) for scour protection of the bridge abutments. All conservation plans/financial assistance program applications that include this practice requires that the I&E be conducted with assistance from a member of the engineering staff with appropriate EJAA.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies to natural or excavated channels where the stream banks adjacent to bridge abutments are susceptible to scour and erosion from the action of water, ice, or debris .

Policies

This practice is ONLY to be used as an associated practice with CPS 578 Stream Crossing (bridge scenario) for scour protection of the bridge abutments. All conservation plans/financial assistance program applications that include this practice requires that the I&E be conducted with assistance from a member of the engineering staff with appropriate EJAA.

- Streams across New Hampshire are experiencing adjustment due to past influences and must be properly evaluated with an interdisciplinary team before planning stabilization.
- Since channel armoring and associated changes to the stream system are a concern, there will need to be a net environmental benefit for projects involving this practice. To provide a net benefit where armoring is planned, there will need to be some concessions made by the landowner to promote stream or riparian function. The landowner may identify important parts of their operation to protect while also identify areas where the stream can function normally (e.g. move laterally, floodplain access and deposition, large buffer establishment, etc.). The result may be a system of conservation practices including Streambank and Shoreline Protection as well as Riparian Forest Buffer, Conservation Cover, and/or Stream Habitat Improvement and Management.
- All sites require a Riparian Forest Buffer, unless approved by the STC.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

Other Considerations

- Use of grading, shaping, excavation, or rock and gravel should be minimized to the extent feasible, while still fulfilling the intended purpose of the project.
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580) Conservation Practice Standard
- Refer to: - Additional Criteria for Streambanks
- This practice will be maintained, as a minimum, for 20 years from the date of establishment.

Stream Habitat Improvement and Management

(Acres) 395

Definition

Maintain, improve or restore physical, chemical and biological functions of a stream, and its associated riparian zone, necessary for meeting the life history requirements of desired aquatic species.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Additions of Coarse Woody Debris to:

- Restore stream heterogeneity including pools, riffles, glides and cascades.
- Reduce flow velocities
- Re-engage flood plains on incised and channelized streams
- Capture inorganic sediments to improve spawning grounds,
- Capture organic detritus and increase the numbers of invertebrates and insects
- Improve populations of insectivorous interior forest birds
- Retain water in deeper pools to provide refuge for fish in hot, dry summers.

Condition Where Practice Applies

On rural landscapes where landowners own both sides of the stream and have limited infrastructure and/or abutters downstream. Especially valuable on cold water streams for trout habitat or in areas where streams deliver high amounts of sediment and nutrients to lakes and ponds.

Policies

Wood Additions scenario requires a DES restoration permit.

Do not measure the width of the stream use a width of 10 feet wide when calculating the payment which is in acres, this take into consideration wood added to the floodplain in smaller streams. The width of the stream refers to the scour channel, this policy is to streamline workloads and the fact that smaller streams take the same amount of time to restore.

Program Payments are authorized for streams:

- Which lack coarse woody debris < 500 pieces per mile
- Are incised or channelized
- Lack pool, riffle, cascade and glide features

Program Payments are not authorized for any measures that:

- Do not have a permit
- Landowners who do not own at least 1000 feet of stream and both sides
- Streams which have not had an assessment of risk and current coarse woody debris

Stripcropping

(Acres) Code: 585

Definition

Growing row crops, forages, small grains, or fallow in a systematic arrangement of equal width strips across a field.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- reduce soil erosion from water,
- reduce transport of sediment and other waterborne contaminants,

Condition Where Practice Applies

This practice applies on sloping cropland where it is an essential part of a cropping system to effectively reduce soil and water losses.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- on fields where current average annual cropland soil loss is estimated at above 'T' value,
- for other practices needed to support this practice including but not limited to:
Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- based on the acres being retained as or planted to hay strips within the field(s) where strip cropping will be implemented,
- on crop fields where this practice has already been established, but installation of additional grass strips will improve resource condition,
- as a one-time payment in the establishment year of the strip cropping system only.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- where less than 50% of the field will consist of erosion resistant cover.

Structure for Water Control

(Number) Code: 587

Definition

A structure in a water management system that conveys water, controls the direction or rate of flow, maintains a desired water surface elevation or measures water.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

The practice may be applied as a management component of a water management system to control the stage, discharge, distribution, delivery or direction of water flow.

Condition where practice applies:

This practice applies wherever a permanent structure is needed as an integral part of a water-control system to serve one or more of the following functions:

- Convey water under roads or other barriers.
- Convey water from one elevation to a lower elevation within, to or from a water conveyance system such as a ditch, channel, canal or pipeline designed to operate under open channel conditions. Typical structures: drops, chutes, turnouts, surface water inlets, head gates, pump boxes and stilling basins.
- Control the direction or rate of water flow to provide habitat for fish, wildlife and other aquatic animals. Typical structures: chutes, cold water release structures and flashboard risers.
- Create, restore or enhance wetland hydrology.
- Measure the rate and flow volume data to improve irrigation water management.

Policies

Use stream crossing practice for large culverts, fords and bridges.

Program Payments are authorized:

- Culverts less than or equal to 30" in diameter used to convey water under roads or other barriers.
- Irrigation flow meters with electronic or mechanical indices as recommended in an approved Irrigation Water Management plan.

Flashboard risers, flap gates or slide gates to control the flow of water in a wetland or other managed area.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- For pipe replacement in both NRCS/SCS designed and non-NRCS designed dams, any dam classification, with an earthen embankment.

Subsurface Drain

(Feet) Code: 606

Definition

A conduit, such as corrugated plastic tubing, tile, or pipe, installed beneath the ground surface to collect and/or convey drainage water.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- regulating water table and ground water flows,
- intercepting and preventing water movement into a wet area, relieving artesian pressures, and/or removing surface runoff,
- serving as an outlet for other subsurface drains,
- remove water from heavy use areas, such as around buildings, farm roads, and accomplish other improvements in resource conditions related to water removal,
- collect ground water for beneficial conservation uses.

Policies

Subsurface drain is considered a facilitating practice. Financial Assistance for Subsurface Drain is limited to the minimum amount and least cost alternative to facilitate other conservation practices that address resource concerns. This practice SHALL NOT be used to drain wetlands, wet pasture or cropland.

As needed to support function of other engineering practices or to manage runoff from a newly installed Seasonal High Tunnel. Subsurface drainage is not to be used to drain wet cropland or pastures. NRCS staff should work with producers to have them avoid these areas during the wet season – not drain them to improve water quality.

Program Payments are authorized:

- only as an approved component of other structural conservation practices (example: diversion, grassed waterway, manure storage facility, etc.),
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.

Program payments are not authorized:

- **when the only purpose is to drain cropland, pastureland, or hayland to improve production and/or facilitate field work, and water quality improvements cannot be demonstrated.**

Other Considerations

- potential water quality and wetland issues associated with practice must be addressed
- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 20 years from the date of establishment.
- potential water quality issues associated with the outflows must be addressed
- When Subsurface Drainage is used to facilitate establishment of the spring development practice, random subsurface drain lines may be installed to intercept subsurface seeps only if the following conditions exist:

- the subsurface drainage is not used to drain a wetland area (unless a Minimal Effect Determination has been approved),
- the subsurface drain is deemed necessary to provide sufficient water flow capacity to the spring.

Tree and Shrub Establishment

(Feet) Code: 612

Definition

Establishing woody plants by planting seedlings or cuttings, direct seeding, or natural regeneration.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice will be used to establish woody plants for:

- creating or enhancing wildlife habitat, food and cover,
- long-term erosion control and improvement of water quality,
- improving or restoring natural diversity,

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies on areas where desired vegetation is suitable and appropriate.

Policies

All container plants are planted with compost and mulched with wood chips. Flexibility has been added to allow planners to use various plant materials to achieve various wildlife, forestry, and bio-engineering goals. For various applications please use a variety of technical materials to make decisions about planting densities and the appropriate plant materials, including other standards and specs, journal articles and consultation with appropriate parties.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for buffers in riparian areas that are not actively in agriculture use (for these situations use riparian forest buffer with foregone income)
- for improvements to wildlife food and cover, erosion control and water quality, and improving or restoring natural diversity
- native plant materials
- increasing densities of riparian buffers or other plantings to increase the effectiveness.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- In dark forest conditions where success rates are low
- Bare root, in areas of reed canary grass or other dense herbaceous vegetation which is not controlled prior to establishment.
- Planting Apple Orchards, a few apple trees can be used as part of the planting plan for wildlife but not more than 10 trees

Other Considerations:

- this practice will be maintained as a minimum for 15 years from the date of establishment.
- When enhancing wildlife food and cover, use the practice to address habitat needs (food and or cover) of the target species or group. Plan to establish species of high wildlife value, native to the area and typical of the site conditions, to supplement the existing vegetation. Consider the potential for natural regeneration before planting. Natural regeneration will generally select the trees and shrubs best suited for the site.

- Always consider potential pest pathways. Hemlock should not be imported and planted. Ash trees that are ½ inch in diameter or greater (any part of tree) may contain larval emerald ash borer (EAB).

Tree and Shrub Site Preparation

(Acres) Code: 490

Definition

Treatment of areas to improve site conditions for establishing trees and/or shrubs.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

The purpose of this practice is to prepare a site for successful establishment of trees and shrubs either through natural regeneration or by plantings. The best example is where there is thick and vigorous reed canary grass in the proposed buffer area.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies on areas where special site preparation steps will be necessary to successfully establish trees and shrubs. This practice is NOT to be implemented on frozen soil.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- Practice may be used for scarification to encourage natural seeding of white pine, aspen other native species. May also be used to prepare a site for Tree/Shrub establishment.
- for site preparation for sites where the Riparian Forest Buffer practice will be implemented
- To establish conditions favorable to direct seeding woody shrubs for New England Cottontail Habitat.
- For running forestry equipment to “knock-down” undesired vegetation in patch cuts, with a hot-saw, skidder or other equipment.

Program Payments are Not authorized:

- Stony soils > 30% surface fragments
- On steep soils >15% slopes or on lesser slopes where erosion is a concern to surface waters.

Other Considerations:

- Avoid scarification in rich hardwoods sites as it encourages white pine often an undesired consequence of direct seeding shrubs.
- For direct seeding late summer is the perfect time for site preparation when the soil is dry and organic matter is at a minimum.

Underground Outlet

(Feet) Code 620

Definition

A conduit installed beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water and convey it to a suitable outlet.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to:

- protect water quality by disposing of excess water from diversions, waterways, roof runoff structures, or other concentrations of water without causing damage by erosion or flooding.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies where:

- excess surface water needs to be disposed of;
- a buried outlet is needed for Diversions (362), or similar practices;
- an underground outlet can be installed that will safely dispose of excess water; and
- surface outlets are impractical because of outlet stability problems, water quality concerns, climatic conditions, land use, or equipment traffic
- subsurface drain is the least cost alternative of conveying excess surface water to a suitable outlet.

Payment rate is based on linear feet of outlet pipe required to reach a suitable outlet.

Policies

Program Payments are authorized:

- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent
- to provide the outlet component for water control practices such as Roof Runoff Structures (558), Diversion (362) and Waterways (412).

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for discharging water without addressing a resource concern.

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

(Acres) Code: 645

Definition

Provide and manage upland habitats and connectivity within the landscape for wildlife.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

Create or enhance wildlife habitat in uplands including cropland, pasture and forest land.

Background:

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management is used for creating snag trees, girdling cull trees, or installing pairs of bird boxes.

Program Payments are authorized:

Mast Tree/Apple Tree Release (each) For creating snag trees girdling cull trees or releasing mast trees on an each basis.

Bird Boxes (each pair) – for installing up to two pair (4 total) per landowner, in large grassland areas. Typical scenario is based on a bluebird size box, but landowners are able to exceed this standard and purchase duckboxes, kestrel boxes, bat boxes etc, with this payment.

Mast Tree Release

- areas managed for wildlife that have apple trees in need of release from woody competition to improve growth and production of soft mast (apples).
- areas managed for wildlife that have native mast trees (beech, oak, black cherry or hickory) that need release from competition to provide for crown expansion and improve in growth and production of mast.
- Scenarios are included for both each tree. For larger areas which contain at least 30 mast trees in one acre use the 666-Timber Stand Improvement.

Vegetated Treatment Area

(Acres) Code: 635

Definition

An area of permanent vegetation used for agricultural wastewater treatment.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To improve water quality by reducing loading of nutrients, organics, pathogens, and other contaminants associated with livestock, poultry, and other agricultural operations

Condition where practice applies

- Where a Vegetated Treatment Area (VTA) can be constructed, operated and maintained to treat contaminated runoff from such areas as feedlots, compost areas, barnyards, and other livestock holding areas; or to treat process wastewater from agricultural operations.
- Where a treatment strip is a component of a planned agricultural waste management system; a treatment strip can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air or water resources; the treatment of contaminated runoff from such areas as feedlots, barnyards, and other livestock holding areas; and/or the treatment of dilute wastewater such as milk house effluent.

Program Payments are authorized:

- Use 342 Critical Area Planting for seeding and 484 for mulching for erosion protection. These should be included as separate items on the contract
- Any component needed to exclude uncontaminated runoff from entering the animal lot of treatment area and components needed to provide soil/liquid separation of contaminated runoff must either be installed in conjunction with the vegetated treatment area to ensure proper functioning of the practice. Approved costs include: grading/shaping to meet NRCS approved engineering design; and devices to spread flow onto the wastewater treatment strip

Waste Storage Facility

(Number) Code: 313

Definition

A waste storage impoundment made by constructing an embankment and/or excavating a pit or dugout, or by fabricating a structure.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to:

- reduce the existing water, land or air pollution by temporarily storing wastes such as manure, wastewater, and contaminated runoff as a storage function component of an agricultural waste management system.

Condition Where Practice Applies

- where the storage facility is a component of a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP),
- where temporary storage is needed for organic wastes generated by agricultural production or processing,
- where the storage facility can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air or water resources,
- where site conditions are suitable for construction of the facility.

Policies

- Payment for most scenarios is based on the area or volume of the required storage area.
- Composting bedded pack facility includes roof, limited to dairy cow facilities, and is sized by square feet per cow as per Extension recommendations, available on engineering section of NH NRCS Sharepoint or from engineering staff.
- these practices are designed to provide facilities for storing, handling or treatment of agricultural wastes,
- the participant may sell waste material,
- the nutrient management practice shall be included in the contract, if it is not already an adopted practice, and maintained for the lifespan of the manure storage facility (15 years) since it is considered part of the operation and maintenance plan of that facility,
- a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan will be developed prior to installing the facility.
- Financial assistance for 313 must be in conjunction with 3 years of 590 (Nutrient Management) or Water Recycling (633) as prescribed in an Approved CNMP or NMP.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for waste storage facilities, such as waste treatment lagoons, liquid manure tanks, holding ponds, collection basins, settling basins, dry stacks and similar facilities,
- only if storage and other associated practices will contribute significantly to maintaining or improving the soil or water quality,
- for structures needed to protect a hopper or manure pump from freezing or other problems associated with weather. These structures shall not be used to house livestock

or farm equipment which is not directly associated with a pump or hopper practice component,

- based on design storage quantity needed, not total storage quantity, of existing animals at the time of application to the program.
- for the least cost alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for waste facilities to store, handle or dispose of chemicals used in the farming operation,
- for measures primarily for preventing air pollution, unless the measures also have soil and water conserving benefits,
- for manure spreaders,
- for portable pumps, or for spreading animal wastes on the land unless part of a distribution systems using irrigation pipeline (see Waste Transfer),
- for buildings or modifications of buildings, or for the portion of the cost of animal waste structures installed under or attached to buildings that serve as part of the building or its foundation,
- for agricultural waste facilities that do not meet local or state regulations,
- for installations that are primarily for the operator's convenience,
- to meet the needs of expanding operations more than 10%,
- Where appropriate field stacking facilities exist.

Other considerations:

- A CNMP (plan) must be completed prior to installing this practice, and the full CNMP fully implemented within 3 years of practice installation

Waste Transfer

(Number) Code: 634

Definition

A system for conveyance of livestock manure, bedding material, spilled feed, process and wash water, or other residues associated with animal production using structures, conduits, or equipment.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To transfer livestock waste or milkhouse/milking parlor wastewater through a hopper or reception pit, a pump (if applicable), or a conduit to:

- a manure storage/treatment facility,
- a loading area,

Condition Where Practice Applies

- where the manure transfer component is a part of a planned manure management or comprehensive nutrient management plan,
- where manure is generated by livestock production or processing and a conveyance system is necessary to transfer manure from the source to a storage/treatment facility and/or a loading area, and/or from storage/treatment to an area for utilization.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for permanently installed pumping equipment needed to load or unload facilities,
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,
- for incidental electrical wiring and hookup of permanent pumps, not to include new transmission lines or power poles,
- to provide for irrigation of wastewater and liquid manure with low percent of solids in order to reduce soil compaction and reduce on-farm energy consumption associated with land application of wastes, only when automatic shutoffs are included on the pump, only on pasture, hayland, or on crop fields employing no-till or minimum tillage systems, or in the spring where cover crops are well established and where wastes will be applied according to a nutrient management plan,

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for portable pumps,
- for manure spreaders or other hauling equipment,
- for spreading animal wastes on the land, unless as part of an approved waste irrigation system,
- for alley scrapers, gutter chains or other typical barn cleaning appurtenances,
- for gravity gutters.

Waste Treatment

(Number) Code: 629

Definition

The mechanical, chemical or biological treatment of agricultural waste.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To use mechanical, chemical, or biological treatment facilities and/processes as part of an agricultural waste management system to:

- improve ground and surface water quality by reducing the nutrient content, organic strength, and/or pathogen levels of agricultural waste,
- improve air quality by reducing odors and gaseous emissions
- facilitate desirable waste handling, storage, or land application alternatives.

Specifically, this practice will be used to:

- provide for milkhouse wastewater treatment and disposal/infiltration on dairy farms.
- collect, handle, store or treat leachate and runoff from bunker or trench silos, and conventional tower silos.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies where the form and characteristics of agricultural waste make it difficult to manage so as to prevent it from becoming a nuisance or hazard or where changing the form or composition provides additional utilization alternatives, and where conventional waste management alternatives are deemed ineffective.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for materials specified in an approved design including but not limited to: excavation, fill and compaction, underground piping and standpipes, other approved drop structures, tanks, and grates.
- for the least cost installation alternative which will achieve the planned practice intent,

Water Well

(Number) Code: 642

Definition

A drilled, dug, driven, bored, jetted or otherwise constructed hole to access water from an aquifer.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

This practice will be used only to provide water for existing irrigation systems or grazing livestock where an **existing water quality resource concern will be addressed**.

Conditions where practice applies

Only where installation of a well is the only available or most cost effective option for providing irrigation water or livestock water in a grazing system where an existing impaired water quality issue will be improved as a result of the implementation and change in management strategy with the use of the well.

Policies:

Water Well is considered a facilitating practice. Financial Assistance for Water Well is limited to the least cost alternative to facilitate other conservation practices that address a water quality resource concern caused by the agricultural operation.

Only approved to address a documented water quality resource concern where installation of a well will improve the water quality impaired by the agricultural operation – alternative livestock water if currently accessing surface water and wetlands; facilitate prescribed grazing system only if prescribed grazing will improve water quality (shifting from corn to sod based system near surface water/wetlands). Water wells for irrigation will also need to demonstrate that it will improve water quality impaired by the agricultural operation. Water Quantity is not an approved resource concern for Water Well for Financial Assistance.

Policies:

- Only when part of a grazing or irrigation system or when used in association with other practices to improve impaired water quality.
- Connection to well is not allowed for other than the planned purpose.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for well drilling to a specified depth,
- for well casing,
- for well caps,
- for driven or dug wells,
- for other conservation practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Irrigation Pipeline (430)
 - Pipeline (516)
 - Diversion (362)
 - Pumping Plant (533)

Program Payments are not authorized:

- when water quantity (for livestock or irrigation) is the only resource concern.
- for electrical hookups or transmission lines, (515.91-B)

- for the well pump, (515.91-B)
- for dry wells, (515.91-B)
- for hydro-fracturing of an existing well,
- for livestock water supply at a barn or barnyard, or for supply to be used for human water consumption.
- if other less expensive options exist for providing livestock or irrigation water,
- if documentation is not provided demonstrating that this practice is the only viable or least expensive planning option.

Other Considerations

- Wells installed for commercial applications shall be installed by a NH licensed well driller.

Watering Facility

(Number) Code: 614

Definition

A device (tank, trough, or other watertight container) for providing animal access to water.

New Hampshire Practice Intent

To provide watering facilities for livestock at selected locations in order to:

- protect and enhance vegetative cover through proper distribution of grazing;
- provide erosion control through better grassland management; or
- protect streams, ponds and water supplies from contamination by providing alternative livestock access to water.

Conditions where practice applies

This practice applies where there is a need for new or improved watering facilities to:

- provide for increased manure distribution throughout the grazing system,
- and to reduce livestock waste in streams or other water bodies.

Policies

For tanks and troughs. For livestock watering as part of a prescribed (rotations) grazing system (meeting the 528 standard), or to manage livestock to prevent degradation of surface and groundwater.

Program Payments are authorized:

- for other conservation practices needed to support this practice which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Spring Development (574)
 - Pipeline (516)
 - Heavy Use Area (561)
 - Pumping Plant (533)
- for water troughs or tanks according to an approved plan or job sheet, including galvanized steel, rubber, or concrete,
- for appurtenances necessary to regulate flow of water including float valves, manual valves, overflow devices, etc.,
- for watering facilities located at heavy use area in a pasture or grazing system.

Program Payments are not authorized:

- for watering facilities in barns or other livestock housing facilities,
- for watering facilities in livestock heavy use areas located at the farmstead or barn complex

Other Considerations

- This practice may adversely affect cultural resources and must comply with GM 420, Part 401.
- topography and distance from water bodies should be considered to maximize water quality protection,
- adequate protection from lightning should be considered,
- due to slow water delivery, nose pumps are not generally a recommended alternative to provide livestock water for dairy milking herds.
- Select a watering facility appropriate for the type of livestock. Nose pumps should not be used for goats, sheep or most other small livestock.

Appendices: Waiver, Approval and Documentation Forms

Practice Cap Waiver Form (2013)

Complete this form to request a waiver of a practice cap

Fax to the New Hampshire NRCS State Office

Attn: State Conservationist (603) 868-5301

Copy to Deb Weymouth – Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Applicant Name: _____

Application Number: _____

Practice Name: _____

Applicant County: _____

Provide a detailed justification regarding the need for a waiver of the conservation practice cap:

Designated Conservationist:

Date:

State Conservationist Comments:

Approval Status: YES _____ NO _____

STC (or Designee):

Date:

Portable Equipment Approval Form (2013)

(Reference 440-CPM, Part 515.81 and 515.91)

Complete this form to request inclusion of portable equipment in an application / contract

Fax to the New Hampshire NRCS State Office

Attn: State Conservationist 1-603-868-5301

Copy to Deb Weymouth, ASTC-Programs

Applicant Name: _____

Application Number: _____

Practice Name: _____

Applicant County: _____

Provide a detailed justification regarding the need to include portable equipment in this contract. Include descriptions of the specific equipment requested.

Designated Conservationist:

Date:

Approval Status: YES _____ NO _____

STC (or Designee):

Date:

New Hampshire NRCS -- Documentation Of Irrigation History And Extent

Applicant Name:
 Farm Name:
 Town:

Complete The Following Information:

Crop Year	Tract Number	Field Numbers/Names	Acres Irrigated	List Irrigation Method(s) Used

Provide a map highlighting the acres which were irrigated for at least two of the five years prior to this Application

 Applicant Signature:

 Date

 NRCS Conservationist Signature:

 Date

***New Hampshire NRCS -- Grassland Bird Management
Field Management Documentation***

Client Name:
Farm Name:
Town:

For all fields receiving payments for the 'Grassland Bird Management' practice payment, Complete The Following Table.

Tract Number	Field Number(s) or Name(s)	Date when first hay cut, and all associated management including raking, baling and spreading of manure was completed	Total Acres Applied

For all fields receiving payments for the 'Grassland Bird Management' practice payment, Complete The Following Table.

Tract Number	Field Number(s) or Name(s)	Date of second hay cut	Date When all associated management including raking, baling and spreading of manure was completed	Total Acres Applied

I certify the hayland management for the benefit of grassland birds was accomplished as documented above.

Applicant Signature:

Date

Waiver Guidelines (2013)

Guidelines to Request a Waiver to Begin a Practice Prior to Contract Approval

If Applicant wishes to begin a practice prior to contract approval a waiver request needs to be submitted and approved by the State Conservationist prior to beginning the practice. The applicant should include the following:

1. Name, Address, Application Number, Practice Name, Applicant County
2. Provide a detailed justification regarding the need for a waiver to begin practice installation.
3. Applicant Signature and Date

The Applicant should understand the following:

Starting a practice before the contract is approved by NRCS causes an applicant to be ineligible for financial assistance for the practice unless a waiver has been granted by the State Conservationist. Applicants may request that the State Conservationist or designee grant a waiver of this provision, in special cases and for meritorious reasons, if the practice has not been started when the waiver was applied for. Meritorious reasons may include the following:

- (1) Alleviation of imminent and significant environmental problems
- (2) Prevention of endangerment to life or property
- (3) Seasonal weather constraints

The applicant should understand that there is no guarantee that the application will result in a contract and that there is no implied expedited payment process if it does. The applicant will be ineligible to receive any program payments if any of the following occur:

- The contract is not approved.
- The practice is not completed in a manner that meets the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications.
- The requested practice is not included in the conservation application/plan approved for funding.
- If they are determined to be ineligible as verified through the FSA Eligibility Web Service prior to the announced deadline.

The waiver must be granted after application for the program has been made but before starting the practice.